

**East Meets West**  
**Technical Solutions to Cross-Cultural Performance**  
**Practice Issues**  
**in Violin Concertos by**  
**Larry Sitsky and Tan Dun**

**By**

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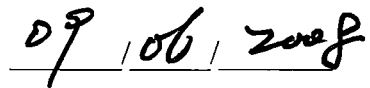
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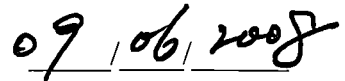
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## **ABSTRACT**

East Meets West: Technical Solutions to Cross-Cultural Performance Practice Issues  
in Violin Concertos by Larry Sitsky and Tan Dun.

Cross-Cultural music has been a topic of great interest in recent decades. A number of Contemporary composers, especially those who were born in the East and received education in the Western world, have produced a large number of remarkable compositions that contain both Eastern and Western musical elements. The synthetic compositional processes used in such music can take different forms, it can be achieved through the fusion of Western and Eastern melodies by employing exotic musical instruments to provide specific sound effects and using Western musical instrument to imitate specific vocal or instrumental sounds.

The two violin concertos, forming the basis of this research, were written by Larry Sitsky and Tan Dun. Both composers were born in China and received their tertiary education in the West. There are differences and similarities between the two concertos and the central aim of this research is to provide a performance guide with detailed performance analyses of these two works. Suggested technical solutions and performance practice issues of the compositions will be discussed in detail. The latter half of this exegesis discusses cross-cultural music as part of cultural appropriation, as well as evaluating the extent of Western and Chinese influences upon the compositional aesthetic of the concertos.

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## INTRODUCTION

Having the chance to live as a musician in different cities in Asia, Europe and Australia, my fascination with cross-cultural music developed and my inquisitiveness about such music has driven me to conduct this research. Cross-cultural musical composition is a significant issue in the history of music development in China and has greatly helped in the broad dissemination of contemporary Chinese music.

This exegesis is primarily concerned with the necessary technical solutions needed for effective performance of the two cross-cultural violin compositions by Larry Sitsky and Tan Dun that form the central basis of this research. Both composers were born in China, their works were in violin concerto form and were composed in the same year. The concerti incorporate Western musical elements and an abundance of Chinese musical ideas with a special focus on particular types of *portamenti*. The execution of Chinese *portamenti* and expression of Chinese musical elements in cross-cultural music present challenging issues to many violinists, especially those who are not familiar with traditional Chinese music. One of my aims in conducting this research is to provide detailed technical solutions to these types of specific technical and expressive demands in these two concertos. These solutions are enhanced through an understanding of interpretation of cross-cultural performance practice issues in the works and will be discussed in Chapters two and three specifically.

In doing this three-year research I have drawn on the resources of a number of music libraries in China and Australia as well as visited a number of Chinese performers and musicological experts, thus enabling me to gain access to important primary and secondary sources on Chinese music and cross-cultural music. I have included the

initial chapter “East meets West” in order to allow my reader to understand more about cultural fusion and the history of violin music in China. Moreover, the final chapter contextualises cross-cultural music as part of cultural appropriation, and presents an evaluation of the extent of Western and Chinese influences upon the composers of the violin concerti. The attached appendices B and C allow the performer to play both concerti in a manner appropriate to the complex styles they respectively represent and I hope violinists and others interested in cross-cultural composition in the Twentieth century will benefit from reading this exegesis.

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## CHAPTER 1 EAST MEETS WEST

### 1.1 East meets West – Cultural fusion and performance practice

Music is the artful arrangement of sounds in time. It is part of almost every culture on Earth, but it varies widely among cultures in style and structure.<sup>1</sup> With the mobility and interaction of people from different cultures, music is able to spread to different regions and thus enables the development of cross-cultural music. The synthetic compositional progression used in this type of music can be distinctive or similar as demonstrated in the two violin concertos under investigation in this exegesis.

Larry Sitsky's *I Ching* violin concerto and Tan Dun's *Out of Peking Opera* violin concerto were both written in 1987. The two works contain many Chinese musical elements as well as other western compositional techniques. One of the most important elements frequently used in these two works is the *portamento*, which is used mostly to resemble the sound performed by the Chinese musical instrument *Erhu* or its variant *Jinghu*. *Portamento* itself is a very common type of performance technique used in instrumental and vocal Chinese music and it can be treated as an inflection that composers use to make their compositions sound more "Chinese." To most Chinese people, traditional music or cross-cultural music using *portamenti* is common and customary to their ears. However, for non-Chinese musicians, *portamenti* when used in the manner of Sitsky and Tan can be a "dreadful" barrier for them to tackle.

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<sup>1</sup> Definition of Music, *Encarta Encyclopedia* [home page on-line]; available from [http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia\\_761568827/Music.html](http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761568827/Music.html); Internet accessed 26 Nov 2007

The aim of my research is to provide performance directions with detailed performance analyses of the two violin concertos, especially on the use of *portamenti*. In order to give my readers diverse and useful information on the subject, I have included in the first chapter the constructions of the two distinctive types of instrument, Violin and Erhu, that represent the West and the East as well as a concise history of cross-cultural music in China. The second and the third chapters feature background information and performing directions of the two violin concertos. Tips on performance are also given to help the reader to achieve better performance when playing cross-cultural violin compositions. The final chapter provides information on World Music as well as giving a general evaluation on the two concertos. I hope my readers can benefit from reading this dissertation.

## 1.2 When violin meets erhu

Violin and erhu, the representatives of the Western and Eastern music, are two distinctive types of bowed string instruments. They are both important members of Western and Eastern musical ensembles and orchestras. Although the basic features of these two types of instruments are not very similar, the sounds they produce are quite comparable and so can be emulated by each other.

The two featured violin concertos of this dissertation are both classified as World Music. They both contain folk musical elements which feature prominently in erhu concertos. Both of these works allow the performer to explore and perform Chinese musical sounds on the violin and a majority of such sounds are played to imitate those produced by an erhu. To reproduce the sound of an erhu using a violin, the performer should first understand the basic characteristics of both instruments and the sounds they produce. After that comes the identification of where the Chinese musical elements exist in the score. The use of *portamenti* or *slides* in the two concertos is significantly important to create a distinctive Chinese mood and atmosphere because this technique is borrowed from those used when playing the erhu. Before looking into the technical aspect of the works, the performer must have some basic knowledge of how a violin and erhu are constructed and sound as well as how Western music was “imported” in China.

### 1.3 Violin – Feature and sound

The violin is the principal bowed musical instrument of the modern string family.<sup>2</sup> The violin offers an unprecedented range of expression, nuance, and intensity, and has inspired great music and great performers. The violin has a complex development history. It was derived from various medieval bowed instruments, descendants of central Asian models brought into tenth-century Spain and southern Italy by the Arabs.<sup>3</sup> These instruments fall into four categories: the rebec, the medieval Renaissance fiddle, the lira da braccio and the viol.<sup>4</sup>

The accepted modern form of the violin was established by 1710, largely owing to the work of Antonio Stradivari whose violin design produced a more powerful sound than its precursors.<sup>5</sup> The modern violin consists of two main parts: the body and the neck. Both are made of wood. The top surface and the bottom of the body are convex. Together with the side-walls, they form a hollow box that acts as a resonator and strengthens the vibrations of the strings.<sup>6</sup> The fingerboard is glued to the neck of the violin, which is carved in one piece with the pegbox and scroll from maple.<sup>7</sup> The four strings of the violin, each wound around a tuning peg, pass from there over a small piece of wood, called the nut, along the fingerboard, then over another piece of wood, called the bridge. These strings are attached to a third piece of wood called the

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<sup>2</sup> Ivanka Nikolova, *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Musical Instruments*, (Cologne: Könemann Verlagsgesellschaft mbH, 2000), 274.

<sup>3</sup> John Stanley, *Classical Music*, (China: Reader's Digest, 1994), 23.

<sup>4</sup> Robin Stowell, *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 5.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 10.

<sup>6</sup> Samuel Adler, *The Study of Orchestration*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2002), 8.

<sup>7</sup> Robin Stowell, *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 1.

tailpiece.<sup>8</sup> The strings, give the instrument a range of over four octaves (g - g'''), are played either by finger (*pizzicato*) or with a bow that is made from a wooden stick stretched with horse hair. The four strings are tuned in fifths as g, d', a', e''.<sup>9</sup> Violins can produce very powerful, emotional and richly nuanced tone in a variety of timbres. This ability allows the instrument to express complex melodies with a richness reminiscent of the human voice, thus establishing its position of superiority among musical instruments from the Baroque period to the present day.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Samuel Adler, *The Study of Orchestration*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2002), 9.

<sup>9</sup> Robin Stowell, *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 9.

<sup>10</sup> Ivanka Nikolova, *The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Musical Instruments*, (Cologne: Könemann Verlagsgesellschaft mbH, 2000), 274.

## 1.4 Erhu – Feature and sound

The erhu is one of the most popular folk instruments in China. It is an outstanding solo instrument and combines well with wind and plucked accompaniment.<sup>11</sup> The Chinese words “Er” means “two” and “hu” means “barbarian”, thus erhu means “double (stringed) barbarian (fiddle).”<sup>12</sup> Belongs to the “Huqin” (Barbarian fiddle) family, the erhu is evolved from the “Yazheng” (bowed zither) of the Tang dynasty (618-906), and the xiqin family found around the areas of Xilamulun River in northeast China.<sup>13</sup>

The erhu is a fiddle (See fig. 1.1) without a fingerboard that contained a hexagonal or octagonal sound box covered by snake skin in one end and an open carved vent on the other with a long neck. It is held vertically on the thigh and played upright like a cello.<sup>14</sup> With a range from d' to d''', the two strings of an erhu are commonly tuned a perfect fifth apart to d' - a', stretched over a bridge which rests against the skin membrane of a wooden sound box.<sup>15</sup> The horse-haired bow runs between the outer, higher pitched d' string and the inner, lower pitched a string.<sup>16</sup> Erhu bowing is performed horizontally using the performer's left-hand with the right hand fingering technique used for altering the bow tension and/or string crossing.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Shen, Sin-Yan, *Chinese Music and Orchestration*, (Chicago: China Music Society of North America, 1991), 75.

<sup>12</sup> Elizabeth May, *Musics of Many Cultures*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), 18.

<sup>13</sup> Chinese music knowledge, “String instruments,” *Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra* [home page on-line]; available from [http://www.hkco.org/big5/learning\\_1\\_tc.asp](http://www.hkco.org/big5/learning_1_tc.asp); Internet; accessed 21 October 2007.

<sup>14</sup> Richard Nidel, *World Music: The Basics* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 217.

<sup>15</sup> Wang Fengqi, *The Chinese Music Dictionary [Zhongguo Yingyu Cidian]*, (Beijing: People's Music Publishing House, 2003), 96.

<sup>16</sup> Zhong Mingyuan, *The Chinese Music Bible [Zhongguo Yingyu Shengjing]*, (Beijing: Jiuzhou Publishing, 2005), 195.

<sup>17</sup> Lee Yuan-Yuan and Sin-Yan Shen, *Chinese Musical Instruments* (Chicago: Chinese Music Society of North America, 1999), 149.

The expressive *erhu* has the capacity to perform lyrical to dazzling music<sup>18</sup> with the use of bowing strength, powerful tension-altering vibrato and a wide variety of *glissandi* or *slides*.<sup>19</sup> Although the Western violin cannot totally achieve Chinese cultural genuine Chinese sounds produced by *erhu*, it can virtually imitate this sound by using suitable *slides* and *portamenti*. Sliding tones are smooth rapid tones based on ever-changing pitches much like *portamento*. These tones are very frequently used in Oriental music.<sup>20</sup>

Fig. 1.1: The violin (left) and the *erhu*<sup>21</sup>



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<sup>18</sup> Elizabeth May, *Musics of Many Cultures*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), 19.

<sup>19</sup> Shen, Sin-Yan, *Chinese Music and Orchestration*, (Chicago: China Music Society of North America, 1991), 149.

<sup>20</sup> Henry Cowell, David Nicholls, *New Music Resources*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 19.

<sup>21</sup> Musical Instruments, *Come Music*, [home page on-line]; available from [http://comemusic.com/book.instrument.php?select=book\\_instrument\\_main](http://comemusic.com/book.instrument.php?select=book_instrument_main); Internet; accessed 1 Nov 2007



## 1.5 The feature of Chinese musical sound

The major influence on the music of a massive area of Southeast Asia has been the traditional music of China. This music is based on complicated theories dating back 3000 years and has greatly influenced the musical development of other Asian countries.<sup>22</sup> Chinese music is a rare type of music with a long history. Its long tradition of well-established artistic values and customs of musical interpretation has made this type of music one of the most difficult to learn in the world.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, the issue of “What makes Chinese music Chinese?” is a very broad and elusive subject to discuss. Although one could look into harmony and musical structure to analyse Chinese music, because China is such a big country and since over time, a great many scale systems have evolved in different geographical regions, it is difficult to succinctly define it.<sup>24</sup>

Nevertheless, American composer Henry Cowell (1897-1965) identified the *sliding tone (portamento)* as an important “marker” of Chinese music. These sliding tones commonly used in operatic and theatre works as well as in instrumental music.<sup>25</sup> Elegant or refined slides are frequently used in Chinese music as indicators of a musician’s artistic control since they frequently distinguish a good performer from an ordinary one.<sup>26</sup> In order to convey and understanding of how to perform Chinese music in an authentic style, I have focused primarily on discussing the proper performance of *portamenti* and *slides* which are routinely incorporated into the two

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<sup>22</sup> Ruth Midgley, *Musical Instruments of the World*, (Holland: Paddington Press Ltd., 1976), 272.

<sup>23</sup> Shen, Sin-Yan, *Chinese Music and Orchestration*, (Chicago: China Music Society of North America, 1991), 120.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid. 2.

<sup>25</sup> Yayoi Uno Everett, Frederick Lau, *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 122.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid. 124.

selected violin concertos. Before discussing the violinistic and performance directions in Chapters Two and Three, a general overview of cultural exchange is given below to convey a concise idea of cultural exchange between the East and the West historically speaking.

## 1.6 A general overview of cultural exchange

*East meets West*, *Cross-Cultural Synthesis*, *Cross-Cultural Confection* and *Cultural Fusion* are all popular terms used to describe the cultural integration or acculturation of different civilizations.<sup>27</sup> The interaction of cultures began several millennia ago. Even though Cultural Fusion happens in all parts of the world and in different period of time, it is always associated with the mobility of people.<sup>28</sup>

The ancient Silk Road that began its route from China, for instance, was one of the most important and famous paths that enabled the occurrence of cross-cultural synthesis. As an important ancient civilizations, China was an interesting commercial centre that was frequently visited by merchants, embassies, and missionaries from the lands of central Asia, from India and from the Middle East.<sup>29</sup> The Silk Road began at Chang'an (known as Xi'an today) and continued through Hexi, Xinjiang, Congling (known as the Bomier Highlands at present), West Asia and finally Europe, covering a total distance of more than seven thousand kilometers. It was a route of congregation for Eastern and Western cultures and served as an important economic bridge between the East and West.<sup>30</sup> As shown by research in recent decades, such long-distance trade in antiquity helped in the cross-pollination of both cultures and ideas.<sup>31</sup>

The ancient Chinese believed that the world was flat and their country was at the centre of this flat plain and thus sometimes described their country as *Zhong Yuan*

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid. xv.

<sup>28</sup> Zhang Xinglang, *The History of Europeanization in the East [Ouhua Dongjianshi]*, (Beijing: Commercial Press House, 2000), 4.

<sup>29</sup> Jacques Gernet, *A History of Chinese Civilization*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 18.

<sup>30</sup> Fu Chunjiang, *Gateway To Chinese Culture*, (Singapore: Asiapac Book, 2003), 131.

<sup>31</sup> Richard Foltz, *Religions of the Silk Road*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000), 7.

(“The Central Plains”). China considered those countries and nations to its western boundary as “Western Countries,” that is those countries now located near the Himalayan Mountains.<sup>32</sup> This concept changed after the 14<sup>th</sup> century when the Ming emperor sent the famous Zheng He (1371-1433) to explore the world.<sup>33</sup> Today, in a geographical sense, “Eastern” countries refer to India, China, Japan, the Far East and Australia, while “Western” countries denote those located in the European plain as well as selected countries from north and south America including the United States. It is between these two broad geographies and cultures that we consider cultural exchange taking place.

“Music” is a universal language.<sup>34</sup> It is one of the most important elements in culture and music varies in its form, and nature in different societies. The term *cross-cultural* represents the perceptions in attributing specific cultural references to art music with regard to artistic production and social reaction.<sup>35</sup> The exchange of cultures occurs everywhere and it always brings about changes in music. A prominent example can be found in the music history of China.

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<sup>32</sup> Fu Chunjiang, *Gateway to Chinese Culture*, (Singapore: Asiapac Books, 2003), 2.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>34</sup> Patrik Juslin, John Sloboda, *Music and Emotion: Theory and Research*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 8.

<sup>35</sup> Yayoi Uno Everett, Frederick Lau, *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 21.

## 1.7 Cross-Cultural exchange of music in China

China, a country with more than 5000 years of civilization, is praised as having one of the richest cultures in the world. Nobody knows exactly when music practices “began” in China, but historical data have proven that formal music practices already existed during the Xia Dynasty (c. 2205-1766 B.C.).<sup>36</sup> During these 5000 years, China had developed its unique form of music. It possesses its own types of musical instruments and music notation as well as distinctive manners of musical performance. However, Chinese music is “multi-cultural” throughout its history. Many of the musical instruments we see in China today were originally imported from “Western” countries and were later developed into unique types of Chinese musical instruments.<sup>37</sup> Currently, the manner of performing and composing Chinese music is usually “Westernized” to greater or lesser extents and thus makes it different from those practices used hundreds of years ago in China.

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<sup>36</sup> Xia Ye, *Concise Ancient History of Chinese Music* [*Zhongguo Gudai Yingyushi Jianbian*], (Shanghai: Shanghai Music Publishing, 2004), 6 – 7.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 69 – 70.

## 1.8 How Western music has influenced the Chinese world

Music from central Asia began to infiltrate China during the Han dynasty (206 B.C. – 220 A. D.), but from the sixth century A.D. onwards, the popularity of foreign music overwhelmed China. In 557 A.D., a “Western” Beidi (ancient country, west of Central China) woman became the bride of the Emperor of Beizhou dynasty in China. She brought a number of musical instruments and musicians with her into the Royal court,<sup>38</sup> thus allowing foreign music to be performed in China. The pear-shaped lute, *pipa*, the harp, cymbals, horns and oboes were introduced and later assimilated into Chinese instrumental ensembles. During the Sui and Tang dynasties (seventh through tenth centuries), the Royal court maintained about nine or ten ensembles, including ensembles from India, Turkestan, Turfan, Samarkand, and Bukhara.<sup>39</sup>

Western music was initially introduced into mainland China around the sixth century. Chinese historians claim that early Christian hymns were sung in the Tang dynasty.<sup>40</sup> These hymns were the type of monophonic plainsongs popular in medieval Europe as a means of daily worship in Christian Churches. Although the official contact of Christianity with the Chinese dated from the late-fifteenth century, Chinese historians found that an early form of Christianity, (named *Jing Jiao* in Chinese), had been established in the capital city Dadui, as early as in the Yuan Dynasty (1277-1368).<sup>41</sup>

The frequent visit of Christian missionaries to China from the late-fifteenth century enhanced the spread of real Western art music throughout mainland China. The first

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., 69.

<sup>39</sup> Elizabeth May, *Musics of Many Cultures*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), 15.

<sup>40</sup> Xia Yanzhou, *Late Modern Chinese Concise Music History* [*Zhongguo Jinxiandai Yinyueshi Jianbian*], (Shanghai: Shanghai Music Publishing, 2004), 26.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

and most famous “musical missionary” was the Italian Jesuit priest, Matteo Ricci (1552-1610). Father Ricci first landed in Macao and settled in Guangdong Province in 1583 with his fellow colleague, Father Michele Ruggieri (1543-1607). When the Jesuits finally reached Peking (Beijing)<sup>42</sup> in January 1601, the gifts they presented to the Ming dynasty (1368-1643) included clocks, books, maps, statues, prisms, tapestries, Western paintings and a wooden clavichord.<sup>43</sup> These offerings, especially the clavichord reportedly amazed Emperor Wan Li and the Royal Palace (The Forbidden City in Beijing).<sup>44</sup>

A moment of connection between European and Chinese music occurred under the sovereignty of the Manchurian Emperor Kangxi (1662-1722) in the Qing dynasty (1644-1911). The Emperor’s curiosity in Western music was encouraged by his musical encounters with Jesuit missionaries, especially Tomas Pereira (1645-1708), a Portuguese priest who arrived in Peking (Beijing) in 1673 and who eventually lived at the palace. Kangxi performed the first cross-cultural music *Pu Yen Zhou*, a Daoist prayer using a harpsichord. Later, Emperor Kangxi invited Teodorico Pedrini (1670-1746), the Italian Jesuit priest who arrived in Peking in 1711 and to teach music to the children at court.<sup>45</sup> Kangxi was an innovative Manchurian Emperor who wanted to reform China with foreign technology and culture. He trusted Father Pedrini and learned Western theory of music that allowed him to recognize an “inadequacy” of Chinese music. He understood that at that moment, Chinese music was characterized by the lack of semitone steps in typical scale forms. Later, he

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<sup>42</sup> The Beijing city was formerly called Peking and was officially renamed in 1980s by the Government of the People’s Republic of China.

<sup>43</sup> Sheila Melvin, Jindong Cai, *Rhapsody in Red. How Western Classical Music Became Chinese*, (New York: Algora Publishing, 2004), 47.

<sup>44</sup> Xia Yanzhou, *Modern Chinese Music History* [*Zhongguo Jinxian dai Yinyueshi Jianbian*], (Shanghai: Shanghai Music Publishing, 2004), 27.

<sup>45</sup> W. Oliver Strunk, Leo Treitler, *Source Readings in Music History*, (New York: W. W. Norton and Co. Ltd., 1998), 724.

ordered his third son to learn music from Father Pedrini and to use Western musical knowledge to help improve and implement a new music system in China.<sup>46</sup> This was one of the real and preliminary acculturations of Western art music into Chinese traditional musical culture and was to influence Chinese music in the ensuing centuries. However, this new musical activity was at its height solely in the Palace. The court records showed that the comic opera *La Cecchina* of Italian composer Niccolò Piccinni was performed in about 1778 in the Palace<sup>47</sup> - surely the only place in China such music was heard at that time.

The spread of Christianity in China further promoted Western art music in the nineteenth century. Ordinary people began to enjoy Western music as the number of churches and school increased. Missionaries were allowed to preach and through daily worship and school lessons, people were able to learn music from them as well as attend classical music performances organized by these foreign missionaries. However, the music being practiced and performed was limited to sacred vocal music.<sup>48</sup> The increasing number of Missionary schools helped in spreading Western cultural ideas. Music was one of the subjects taught in such schools. Chinese students studied the lives of the great classical European composers and if possible, their music in schools. Many students learned to play the piano and violin.<sup>49</sup>

From the mid nineteenth century, more of the wealthier Chinese families tended to follow the trend of sending their children abroad to study. Three of the most pretigious

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<sup>46</sup> Tao Yabing, *Music Aculturation of East and West in the Ming and Qing Dynasties* [*Mingqing jiande Zhongxi Yinyue Jiaoliu*], (Beijing: Oriental Press, 2001), 38.

<sup>47</sup> Tao Yabing, *Historical Scripts of Music Acculturation of East and West* [*Zhongxi Yinyue Jiaoliu Shigao*], (Beijing: China Encyclopedia Press, 1994), 140-141.

<sup>48</sup> Wang Yuhuo, *Chinese Late Modern Music* [*Zhongguo Jinxindai Yinyueshi*], (Beijing: Higher Education Publications, 2005), 38.

<sup>49</sup> Sheila Melvin, Jindong Cai, *Rhapsody in Red. How Western Classical Music Became Chinese*, (New York: Algora Publishing, 2004), 83.



destinations for studying include Japan, France and United States of America. These students usually studied science, music or arts subjects and they were important in promoting cross-cultural music and art in China after the completion of their overseas study. Other Chinese embassies or travelers such as Zeng Jize (1839-1890) Li Gui (1842-1903), also contributed to the spread and promotion of Western music after their trips to the United Kingdom and the United States of America respectively.<sup>50</sup>

Shanghai, once hailed as “Paris of the East,”<sup>51</sup> became a multi-cultural metropolis in which thousands of foreigners (including the French, British, and Japanese) lived in their own concessions<sup>52</sup> during the late nineteenth century. There were a number of political concessions in the old city of Shanghai during that period. Music performances became extremely active with several orchestras formed in the 1880s, including the Shanghai Municipal Orchestra and Shanghai Public Band.<sup>53</sup> Such orchestras were mainly formed by foreigners. For example, Sir Robert Hart (1835-1911), an officer of British embassy in Tianjin, formed and trained his own 20-member orchestra in 1885, the “Hart Orchestra.” This orchestra was later expanded and reformed as the *Union Philharmonique de Peking* in 1914.<sup>54</sup>

Western art music was extremely active with the decline of Qing dynasty in 1911. The educational system of republican China was modelled after those of the West, with Western music or Westernized Chinese music being taught in schools. The first

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<sup>50</sup> Xia Yanzhou, *Late Modern Chinese Concise Music History* [Zhongguo Jinxiandai Yinyueshi Jianbian], (Shanghai: Shanghai Music Publishing, 2004), 60.

<sup>51</sup> Heidi Sopinka, *Insight Guide East Asia* (Singapore: Apa Publications GmbH & Co., 1999), 91.

<sup>52</sup> The term “Concession” was a popular word to denote an area within one country that is administered by another.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 61.

<sup>54</sup> Xia Yanzhou, *Late Modern Chinese Concise Music History* [Zhongguo Jinxiandai Yinyueshi Jianbian], (Shanghai: Shanghai Music Publishing, 2004), 63.

conservatory of music in Western style was established in Shanghai in 1927.<sup>55</sup> It was in early twentieth century Shanghai that the business and intellectual classes could begin to learn Western music. Many exiled Russian and Jewish musicians arrived and settled in Shanghai, Tianjin and Beijing speeding the spread of Western art music in China.<sup>56</sup> The search for a combination between Western and Chinese musical expression became the major concern of a younger generation composers. Western compositional techniques were first used in the early 1930s and have continued in practice to the present in China.<sup>57</sup>

Aside from the attempt of contemporary Chinese students and musicians to explore Western music, foreign scholars had a growing interest in traditional Chinese music. In 1936, American scholar John Hazedel Levis wrote a book called *Foundations of Chinese Musical Art*. Levis had been living in China for twenty-five years and was a keen researcher of Chinese folk music. His research finally turned into the first Chinese music research findings by a foreign researcher.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Elizabeth May, *Musics of Many Cultures* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), 22.

<sup>56</sup> Bruno Deschênes, "Where East meets West: Contemporary Chinese Music" *La Scena Musicale* (February 2004), 24-25.

<sup>57</sup> Elizabeth May, *Musics of Many Cultures* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), 22.

<sup>58</sup> Xia Yanzhou, *Late Modern Chinese Concise Music History* [*Zhongguo Jinxindai Yinyueshi Jianbian*], (Shanghai: Shanghai Music Publishing, 2004), 153.

## 1.9 Recent developments of cultural exchange in music

After the establishment of the new Government in the Mainland in 1949, China was emerging with a musical scene that was beginning to record the traditions of the past while also creating new music for the world.<sup>59</sup> Scholars conducted research into traditional Chinese folk songs. Folk songs published at that time were usually “modernized” and “harmonized” by Western-minded Chinese who took nineteenth-century European Romantic composers’ arrangements of European folk songs as models.<sup>60</sup> Thus some of these songs are written no longer for solo voice but with piano accompaniment.

However, many professional performance groups and music conservatories were forced to close down during the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), and much of their repertory was banned, whether they were for Western or Chinese instruments. All musical activities were under the control of Jiang Qing, the wife of Chairman Mao Zidong and her cultural allies. By 1967, except for five revolutionary model operas, two ballets, and a model symphony, any musical composition had to be officially vetted and approved before it was published or performed.<sup>61</sup> Intellectual activities during this period were greatly suppressed and students from conservatories were relocated to work in fields in rural areas thus forcing these students to stop academic study.

When Deng Xiaoping consolidated his power in 1978, China began to recover from

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<sup>59</sup> Richard Nidel, *World Music: The Basics* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 215.

<sup>60</sup> Elizabeth May, *Musics of Many Cultures* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983), 20.

<sup>61</sup> Robert Provine, Yoshihiko Tokumaru and Lawrence Witzleben, *East Asia: China, Japan and Korea – Garland Encyclopedia of World Music, Vol. 7* (New York: Routledge: 2002), 349.

the damage brought by the Cultural Revolution. The “Open Door” policy and its entrance to the world community enhanced the exchanges of personnel and foreign trade: thus scores, recordings and books were imported, making twentieth century Western music available to Chinese musicians and students.<sup>62</sup> A flow of students once again re-entered the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing and resumed their studies and some of the young composition students were able to travel abroad and absorb Western avant-garde musical ideas and compositional techniques.<sup>63</sup>

Modern composers such as Tan Dun, Qu Xiaosong, Chen Qigang, Chen Yi, Zhou Long, Huang Anlun, Ye Xiaogang, among others, are part of a “new wave” of artists who are becoming recognized for their cross-cultural compositions.<sup>64</sup> Appendix A shows a selected list of contemporary composers who have written cross-cultural music. With the assistance of the “Open Door” policy, these Chinese-born composers received their undergraduate music training before heading to the United States of America and Europe to further their musical studies. The search for a synthesis in musical expression between the West and China became the major concern of these young composers.<sup>65</sup> Many of their compositions are of a cross-cultural type, employing both Western and Chinese musical instruments and/or using traditional folk tunes as musical ideas. Their exploration and combination of a mixture of contemporary Western and Chinese compositional techniques is characteristic of current Chinese music.<sup>66</sup> Moreover, new forms of solo “musical instruments” are being used in concertos; two significant examples are the Water Concerto and Paper

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid, 341.

<sup>63</sup> Yayoi Uno Everett, Frederick Lau, *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music*, (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 7.

<sup>64</sup> Richard Nidel, *World Music: The Basics* (New York: Routledge, 2004), 215.

<sup>65</sup> Elizabeth May, *Musics of Many Cultures*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press: 1983), 22.

<sup>66</sup> Robert Provine, Yoshihiko Tokumaru and Lawrence Witzleben, *East Asia: China, Japan and Korea – Garland Encyclopedia of World Music, Vol. 7* (New York: Routledge: 2002), 350.

Concerto written by the innovative “avant-garde” composer Tan Dun in 1998 and 2003 respectively.

Aside from Western music, traditional Chinese music has absorbed many Westernized musical ideas and systems in the last century. The modern Chinese classical orchestra evolved from the traditional southern Chinese instrumental ensemble known formerly as “Southern Silk and Bamboo.” Traditionally they were performed in unison with some heterophonic effects, but the current trend is for Western influence can be heard in the use of sequential melodies and triadic chords. Another Western influence was shown with the use of low register instruments such as cellos and double basses in modern Chinese orchestras.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Elizabeth May, *Musics of Many Cultures*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press: 1983), 19.

## 1.10 Cross-cultural music as part of cultural appropriation

*East meets West*, *Cross-Cultural Synthesis*, *Cross-Cultural Confection* and *Cultural Fusion* are all different terms used to describe the cultural mix or acculturation of different civilizations. However, cross-cultural music is a subdivision of the extensive subject of Cultural appropriation.

Cultural appropriation, the use of a culture's tradition, symbols, or technologies by the community of another culture, is unavoidable when cultures come into contact.<sup>68</sup> According to Professor Richard A. Rogers' model of categorizing cultural appropriation, four types of appropriation can be identified. Among these types, "Cultural exchange" is defined as the reciprocal exchange of symbols, artifacts, rituals, genres, and/or technologies between cultures with roughly equal levels of power.<sup>69</sup> The development of cultural appropriation in music has an extended history in European art music, which bears numerous traces of the adoption of fashionable European popular and folk dances into the classical or Western Art music genre. Eighteenth century "Orientalism" was a fashion in which Western art music composers tried to write music incorporating "exotic" musical elements. It was a distinctive period in the history of music that saw the beginnings of cross-cultural music. Increasingly composers began writing music with folk and foreign musical elements. In 1775, Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 5, K. 219 "Turkish" incorporated some "Turkish" melodies in its final movement.<sup>70</sup> Bruch's *Scottish Fantasy*, Op. 46

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<sup>68</sup> Richard Rogers, "From Cultural Exchange to Transculturation: A Review and Reconceptualization of Cultural Appropriation", *Communication Theory*, (International Communication Association, 16/2006), 474.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 477.

<sup>70</sup> Ted Libbey, *The NPR Guide to Building a Classical CD Collection* (New York: Workman Publishing Company, Inc., 1999), 262-263.

of 1880, contains real Scottish folktunes in nearly all of its movements.<sup>71</sup> Puccini borrowed the famous Chinese folktune *Mu Li Hua* in his opera *Turandot* in 1926<sup>72</sup> and in *Das Lied von der Erde* (1908-1909), Mahler used Tang poetry as lyrics for his music.<sup>73</sup>

However, the subject of Cultural appropriation is such a huge topic that it could become the topic of an entire paper in its own right. The major concern of this exegesis is to see how cross-cultural violin concertos have “taken” musical ideas from other cultures and how performers might classify these works.

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<sup>71</sup> Michael Steinberg, *The Concerto – A Listener's Guide* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 152-154.

<sup>72</sup> Burton Fisher, *Turandot – Opera Journeys Mini Guide Series* (Miami: Opera Journeys Publishing, 2000), 22.

<sup>73</sup> Chris Woodstra, Gerald Brennan and Allen Schrott, *All Music Guide to Classical Music* (San Francisco: Backbeat Books, 2005), 786.

## 1.11 Defining Western Art Music and World Music

### Western Art Music

Western Art Music is a term used to describe “classical” music that originated in the Western world. The word “Western” is somehow deceptive because *Western Art Music* or the broad term *Western Music* also includes music from North and South America. The large number of musical forms from different European countries and the United States of America, developed from 1900 and has considerably widened the definition of classical music.

### World Music

World music is too broad a category to be adequately examined in this exegesis and there is really no easy definition to describe the term concisely.<sup>74</sup> The term “World Music” was first used in 1889 at the *Paris Exposition Universelle* where music from exotic regions and countries such as Indonesia, Japan, and Vietnam could be heard.<sup>75</sup> A more contemporary usage of the term can be found in late 1970s and early 1980s when some ethnomusicologists were using the expression “World Music” to illustrate all the music of the world’s people as distinct from Western music.<sup>76</sup> According to Dr. Carl Rahkonen, ethnomusicology and professor of Indiana University, World Music is defined as:

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<sup>74</sup> Chris Nickson, *The NPR Curious Listener’s Guide to World Music*, (New York: Grand Central Press, 2004), 2.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid. 10.

<sup>76</sup> Timothy Taylor, *Global Pop: World Music, World Market*, (New York: Routledge, 1997), 2.



World Music is the currently popular alternative for terms such as *primitive*, *non-Western*, *ethnical* and *folk* music. World music can be traditional (folk), popular or even “classical” art music, but it must have ethnic or foreign elements.<sup>77</sup>

However, this is not the only definition of World Music. Definitions of this term vary greatly according to professors and researchers. Up to this moment, any reader interested in knowing this subject would find it quite difficult to fully understand. As a violinist myself, my cross-cultural music experience learnt in China, Portugal and Australia has allowed me to treat “world music” as Professor Richard Rogers of Northern Arizona University described:

A broad category that has been institutionalized in the North American music industry since the mid 1980s despite a much longer habit of borrowing from non-Western music traditions. The category can include the traditional music of indigenous peoples, the borrowing of non-Western music style and instrumentation by Western musicians, and the fusion of multiple musical traditions. In practice, just about anything other than mainstream Western art music is dumped into the category World Music.<sup>78</sup>

The diversity of world music can seem almost immeasurable, and the only way to approach it all seems to be by continent or major geographical region.<sup>79</sup> “The Garland encyclopedia of World Music” is by far the most useful resource to study World Music and it is divided into sections based around geographical region. The complex nature of World Music blurs traditional western music boundaries of theory

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<sup>77</sup> Carl Rahkonen, “What is World Music”, *World and Ethnic Music* [home page on-line]; available from <http://www.people.iup.edu/rahkonen/ilwm/WMBI.html>; Internet; accessed 25 June 2007.

<sup>78</sup> Carl Rahkonen, “What is World Music”, *World and Ethnic Music* [home page on-line]; available from <http://www.people.iup.edu/rahkonen/ilwm/WMBI.html>; Internet; accessed 25 June 2007.

<sup>79</sup> Chris Nickson, *The NPR Curious Listener’s Guide to World Music*, (New York: Grand Central Press, 2004), 29.

and cultural context when identifying music. Therefore defining distinctive origins of music and culture became increasingly challenging.<sup>80</sup>

Richard Rogers' definition mentioned above is comprehensive in seeking to define such a broad category of music and thus provides a clear and comprehensive way of classifying the music. The four groups of key conditions Rogers suggests should be noted carefully when we are defining world music are:

- (i) Anything other than typical Western music
- (ii) Music that employs ethnic or exotic musical elements
- (iii) Appropriation of a non-Western musical style and instrumentation
- (iv) Synthesis of multiple traditions

The name "World Music" was first used in higher education, as music departments began teaching ethnomusicology.<sup>81</sup> In the late 1980s, the term appeared in the commercial marketplace, initially referring to audio recordings that united Western popular music with indigenous ethnic musics. At present, "World Music" loosely includes all styles of music with ethnic or foreign elements.<sup>82</sup>

Although contemporary Western Art music and World music are dissimilar in definition, these two types of music in some ways overlap each other. Classical music now consists of a plurality of musical style. The geographical extent of composers reaches far and wide, from West to East, from old to new worlds. The stylistic

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<sup>80</sup> Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert and Richard Middleton, *The Cultural Study of Music*, (New York: Taylor & Francis Books, Inc., 2003), 53.

<sup>81</sup> Carl Rahkonen, "What is World Music", *World and Ethnic Music* [home page on-line]; available from <http://www.people.iup.edu/rahkonen/ilwm/WMBI.html>; Internet; accessed 25 June 2007.

<sup>82</sup> Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert and Richard Middleton, *The Cultural Study of Music*, (New York: Taylor & Francis Books, Inc., 2003), 53.

diversity currently found is such that no one style or composer dominates the field like the former masters of music decades or centuries ago. Today, many leading composers focus on cross-culturalism in music and produce a vast amount of work with distinctive multi-cultural characteristics.

## 1.12 The dissemination and development of violin music in China

The violin is one of the most fascinating instruments, almost every European country has made its claim to the creation of this instrument, but no one can seriously challenge the pre-eminence of Italy in its history.<sup>83</sup> The famous Cremona violins of the early sixteenth century have captivated many violinists and violin collectors since that time. The violin and its music were imported to China with the arrival of Christian missionaries. In 1697, nine Jesuit priests arrived in Beijing upon the request of the Emperor Kangxi; these talented priests did not just bring with them knowledge of religion, science and languages, some of them were also talented in music. They brought a number of different musical instruments to China, including the fiddle.<sup>84</sup> Two years later, they formed the earliest Western music ensemble in China and performed the first chamber music concert to the Emperor in Zhenjiang.<sup>85</sup>

However, the music performed by these ensembles were solely Western music and a Italian missionary Teodorico Pedrini even composed the first violin music *Sonate a Violino Solo col basso del Nepridi, opera terza* (“Sonata for Solo Violin and Basso Continuo by Nepridi, op. 3”) in China between 1711-1746. Pedrini purposely played around with his surname and wrote it as “Nepridi” in the manuscript.<sup>86</sup> This work was written in the form of a typical Baroque violin sonata and is believed to have been performed by a musical group of Palace eunuchs who received regular musical training from the missionaries.<sup>87</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Robin Stowell, *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 9.

<sup>84</sup> Qian Renping, *Chinese Violin Music [Zhongguo Xiaotiqian Yinyue]*, (Changsha: Hunan Art Publishing, 2001), 20.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 20-21.

<sup>86</sup> Fang Hao, *History of Communication between China and the West [Zhongxi Jiaotongshi]*, (Changsha: Yueli Publishing, 1987), 901.

<sup>87</sup> Qian Renping, *Chinese Violin Music [Zhongguo Xiaotiqian Yinyue]*, (Changsha: Hunan Art Publishing, 2001), 28.

Before the First Opium War (or First Anglo-Chinese War: 1839-1842), the spread and practice of violin music and violin playing was limited to the Palace as mentioned earlier. The violin had a superior status to that of the clavichord or harpsichord, that was introduced to the Qing dynasty at almost the same time, because the violin could be more expressive and used as both a solo and chamber music instrument. After the Second Opium War (1856-1860), the spread of violin music was enhanced by the frequent musical performances held in major cities in China.<sup>88</sup>

Concert performances of Western symphony orchestras greatly helped to promote Western music in China after the Opium Wars. Because contemporary Chinese became Westernized, they were more willing to accept foreign cultures. Studying abroad became very common to young students. The first group of remarkable violin students travelled to Tokyo, Japan to study in Tokyo Conservatory of music between the 1900s to 1910s.<sup>89</sup> These students have contributed to the spread of violin music and violin education upon their return to their motherland. Some of these students later entered some Western orchestras and worked with their foreign colleagues in the orchestra for several years before the disbanding of the orchestras. These local violinists later became concert organizers or teachers in Mainland China.

Because of the local and worldwide political situation, violin performances and education only developed gradually in the 1910s to 1940s. However, a number of Jewish and Russian musicians did provide musical training for Chinese violin students, thus helping a lot of students to master their violin performance.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Xia Yanzhou, *Late Modern Chinese Concise Music History* [*Zhongguo Jinxiandai Yinyueshi Jianbian*], (Shanghai: Shanghai Music Publishing, 2004), 61.

<sup>89</sup> Qian Renping, *Chinese Violin Music* [*Zhongguo Xiaotiqian Yinyue*], (Changsha: Hunan Art Publishing, 2001), 43-44.

<sup>90</sup> Wang Yuhuo, *Chinese Late Modern Music* [*Zhongguo Jinxiandai Yinyueshi*], (Beijing: Higher

There were only limited number of significant violinists in early twentieth century China. One of the most famous violinist and composer was Ma Sicong, who furthered his violin studies in France in 1923 and returned to China in 1929.<sup>91</sup> He was the first “true” concert violinist and composer of violin music in China. Another famous figure was composer Xian Xinghai who went to Paris in 1930. He first studied violin but later switched to the field of composition and had become student of the famous French composer Paul Dukas.

The establishment of the Peoples Republic of China in 1949 provided a comparably more stable political situation to the Chinese. The establishment of the Shanghai Conservatory of Music in 1927 (renamed as the present name in 1956) and the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing in 1950 provided formal musical training for violin students. These conservatories are still two of the most influential music educational institutes in Mainland China. In recent decades, many international violin competition winners came from these two conservatories. Studying Western music has been a trend in many Chinese communities in the world in recent decades and Chinese musicians in these communities have kept pace with international trends in music making.<sup>92</sup> Their music is no longer bound by their musical tradition.

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Education Publications, 2005), 241.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 66-67.

<sup>92</sup> Elizabeth May, *Musics of Many Cultures*, (Los Angeles: University of California Press: 1983), 25.

### 1.13 The influence of cultural exchange on violin literature composed in the twentieth century

In China, there was only very limited literature for the violin in the early twentieth century. One of the very first violin compositions written by a Chinese composer was Li Xiguang's *Xing Lu Nan* ("Walking in Barrier Path"). Li Xiguang was a geologist and an amateur violinist who furthered his studies in England in 1910s.<sup>93</sup> Some other early compositions include Xing Xinghai's *Violin Sonata in D minor* written in Paris and Ma Sicong's *Mongolia Suite* and *Herder's Song* for solo violin.

Written in 1959, the "Butterfly Lovers" Violin Concerto became another famous musical composition to both Chinese and Western listeners. Modern violin compositions by "New Wave" composers such as Tan Dun, Qu Xiaosong, Chen Qigang, Chen Yi, Zhou Long, Huang Anlun, Ye Xiaogang were almost all presented with cross-cultural characteristics. Modern concertos by new wave composers were sometimes not written for Western orchestras but employ a traditional Chinese orchestra to accompany solo instruments including the violin, such as Bright Sheng's *Spring Dreams* for Violin and Traditional Chinese Orchestra (1997-1999)<sup>94</sup>,

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<sup>93</sup> Wu Hui, Meng Weiping, *The Concise History of Violin Music in Beijing* (Beijing: Musical Instrument, June 2005), 70.

<sup>94</sup> G. Schirmer, "Bright Sheng" *Work list* [home page on-line]; available from [http://www.schirmer.com/Default.aspx?TabId=2419&State\\_2872=2&composerId\\_2872=1436](http://www.schirmer.com/Default.aspx?TabId=2419&State_2872=2&composerId_2872=1436); Internet; accessed 10 November 2007.

**1.14 Chinese violin literature composed in the twentieth century**

There were many significant violin compositions written by numerous Chinese-born composers in the twentieth century. These composers were almost all exposed to multi-cultures and received their training from more than one country. The works written by them are in various musical forms, including works for solo violin, chamber music with violins and compositions for solo violin and orchestra. These compositions were very often incorporated with Chinese *portamenti*, creating unique music styles. Some of the more popular Chinese violin compositions of the twentieth century are listed below:

Table 1: Popular Chinese Violin Compositions

COMPOSERS	VIOLIN COMPOSITIONS
Chen, Yi	“Fisherman Song” for Violin and Piano
	“Romance of Hsiao and Ch’in” for Two Violins and String Orchestra
	“Chinese Folk Dance Suite” for Violin and Orchestra
Guo Wenjing	“Local Rhyme of China” Violin Concerto, Op. 13
He, Zhanhao and Chen, Gang	“Butterfly Lovers” Violin Concerto
Huang, Anlun	“Rondo” for Solo Violin, Op. 16
	Violin Concerto in B, Op. 47b
Lam, Bun Ching	“Lang Tao Sha” for Solo Violin and Orchestra
	“Bittersweet Music II” for Solo Violin



COMPOSER	VIOLIN COMPOSITIONS
Lam, Doming	“Oriental Peral” for Solo Violin
Ma, Sicong	“Herder’s Song” for Solo Violin
Mao, Yun	“The Joy of Spring” for Solo Violin
Qu, Xiaosong	“Ji” No. 7 for Solo Violin
	“The Girl of the Mountain” for Solo Violin and Orchestra
Sheng, Bright	“The Stream Flows” Two Pieces for Solo Violin
	“Spring Dreams” for Violin and Traditional Chinese Orchestra
Sitsky, Larry	“Mysterium cosmographicum”, Concerto for Violin, Orchestra and Female Voices
Sun, Daniel	“Aria” for Unaccompanied Violin
Tan, Dun	“Out of Peking Opera” Violin Concerto
Xian, Xinghai	Violin Sonata in D minor
Ye, Xiaogang	Violin Concerto No. 1
	“Last Paradise” for Violin and Orchestra
Yu, Julian	“Passacaglia”, after Biber for Solo Violin
Zhou, Long	“Taiping Drum” for Violin and Piano
	“Partita” for Solo Violin

## 1.15 Cross-cultural Chinese violin music – a conclusion

Western art music has been a major influence on Chinese music since the late-fifteenth century. The early Jesuit missionaries who spread Christianity in China and foreign musicians who resided in this country in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, have contributed greatly to the development of Western art music in China. Composers and performances in the early twentieth century helped to develop fundamental cross-cultural violin repertoires. In the second half of the twentieth century, the availability of music scores and recordings greatly enhanced the promotion of contemporary violin music, and created a corresponding demand for it listeners. People in Mainland China now enjoy and perform western music and the popularity of violin music is very high in China, especially in the last three decades. Large numbers of violin students continuing to further their studies in music institutions and conservatoria all over the world.

Cross-cultural violin music is still growing with the support of pioneer composers such as Bright Sheng, Tan Dun, Ye Xiaogang and Chen Yi, among others. An increasing number of artists participate in cross-cultural music performances and projects around the globe, such as the “Silk Road Project” organized by cellist Yo-yo Ma in 1998.<sup>95</sup> As part of this trend, contemporary violin compositions continue to follow the general trend of ongoing cross-cultural music. It is assumed that composers will still write music with Chinese musical elements for Western musical instruments, just as Larry Sitsky and Tan Dun did in the 1980s. Performers of such types of music should have a comprehensive knowledge on both Western and Chinese musical instruments as well as clear understanding on how specific sound effects intended by composers are achieved, in order to effectively perform this music.

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<sup>95</sup> Silk Road Project, “Silk Road Project – About Us,” *Silk Road Project* [home page on-line]; available from <http://www.silkroadproject.org/about/index.html>; Internet; accessed 17 February 2007.

## CHAPTER 2 LARRY SITSKY: *I CHING* VIOLIN CONCERTO

### 2.1 Larry Sitsky – the composer

Born to a Russian Jewish family on 10 September 1934 in Tianjin, China, Larry Sitsky is regarded as one of the most prolific and respected composers, musicologists and pianists in Australia. The city of Tianjin was a metropolis in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. It was richly influenced by Western and Eastern culture, and definitely influenced Sitsky who spent his first sixteen years there before coming to Australia.

The Sitsky family left China after the establishment of the People's Republic of China in 1949, and came to Australia in 1951. Sitsky began his study at the New South Wales State Conservatorium of Music the next year where he studied piano and composition, graduating in 1955. In 1959 he won a scholarship to the San Francisco Conservatory, where he studied with Egon Petri for two years. Returning to Australia, he joined the staff of the Queensland Conservatorium of Music. A grant from the Myer Foundation in 1965 enabled him to conduct research into the music of Ferruccio Busoni, about whom he has written extensively. In 1966 he was appointed Head of Keyboard Studies at the Canberra School of Music and has been Head of Composition Studies since 1978.<sup>96</sup>

As a performer, Sitsky has always championed twentieth-century solo piano repertoire and collaborated with some of Australia's finest musicians, namely Ernest Llewellyn, Jan Sedivka and Oleg Kryssa being the most prominent examples. As a

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<sup>96</sup> Robyn Holmes and Peter Campbell, "Larry Sitsky," *Grove Music Online* ed. L. Macy [home page on-line]; available from <http://www.grovemusic.com>; Internet; accessed 10 October 2005.

composer, Sitsky has had works commissioned by many leading Australian and international bodies, such as the ABC, Musica Viva, the International Clarinet Society, the Sydney International Piano Competition, Flederman and the International Flute Convention. Sitsky's compositional output includes six operas, over twenty large-scale orchestral pieces, more than forty chamber works for a variety of instrumental ensembles, over thirty piano works and twenty plus solo instrumental works.<sup>97</sup> Since 1961, Sitsky has formed an enduring friendship and collaborative musical relationship with the renowned violinist Jan Sedivka, who became the dedicatee of Sitsky's four violin concertos as well as his *Tetragrammaton* for violin and piano. Sedivka's indirect influence on Sitsky's work can also be seen in many chamber works involving string instruments.<sup>98</sup> Sedivka premiered the first three violin concertos as well as the chamber work *Tetragrammaton*. With Sitsky's diverse cultural background, it is not surprising to see that his compositions contain diverse cultural elements. He himself has said that his background had enabled him to write music with a "cultural mix".<sup>99</sup> This aspect is clearly evidenced in his *I Ching* violin concerto (See fig. 2.1).<sup>100</sup>

Fig. 2.1: Larry Sitsky's *I Ching* violin concerto manuscript (second movement, ms. 16-25).



<sup>97</sup> Jim Cotter, *Sitsky: Conversations With The Composer* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2004), 1.

<sup>98</sup> Patricia Shaw, "The String Music of Larry Sitsky, 1959-1994," *Australian String Teacher*, xvi (1994), 12.

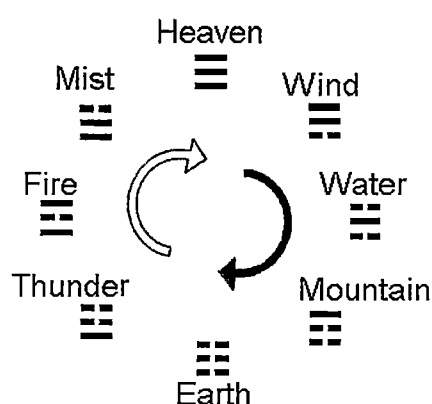
<sup>99</sup> *Sunday Tasmanian* (Hobart), 10 October 2004.

<sup>100</sup> Personal collections: Larry Sitsky, *I Ching* Violin Concerto Manuscript (Not composer's autograph).

## 2.2 *I Ching* violin concerto – background information

Larry Sitsky's *I Ching* violin concerto was completed in March 1987 on commission from the Australian String Teachers Association. *I Ching* or "Book of Changes" is the oldest of the Chinese classic texts. It describes an ancient system of cosmology and philosophy which is at the heart of Chinese cultural beliefs. *I Ching* symbolism is based on a simple unbroken line called *yang* (—) and a broken line, *yin* (--). *Yin* and *yang* are the Chinese terms representing different polarities of the universe. *Yang* bears the meaning of active, light and strong whereas *Yin* – the complementary passive, dark and weak. By putting together three lines, *yin* or *yang*, in all possible combinations, eight trigrams *Kua* were formed, and were used to represent the eight basic elements.<sup>101</sup> These elements are: Water, Wind, Mountain, Thunder, Mist, Heaven, Fire and Earth. The eight trigrams are arranged in such a way that the polar opposites are across from one another. Moving clockwise from the top, heaven is across from earth, wind from thunder, water from fire and mountain from lake as shown in figure 2.2.<sup>102</sup>

Fig. 2.2: The arrangement of Eight Trigrams



<sup>101</sup> Huang, Kerson and Rosemary Huang, *I Ching* (New York: Workman Publishing Company, Inc., 1987), 8.

<sup>102</sup> R. L. Wing, *The I Ching Workbook* (New York: First Broadway Books, 2001), 14.

The philosophy of *I Ching* focuses not just on the eight trigrams, but on its various combinations of the possible sixty-four hexagrams that can help a person to understand the nature of his/her state of consciousness. By superimposing the trigrams, a higher level of representation is achieved. That is, the lower trigram indicates the cause of the situation and the upper means the surface appearances of the issue. The hexagram represents a state, a process or changes happening, as well as giving people prediction and hints to follow.<sup>103</sup> It is interesting that the judgments of the *I Ching* often warn against danger and turbulence.

Sitsky's Concerto is prefaced with an illustration of the eight trigrams of the above *I Ching* philosophy. He has taken the names of the eight trigrams as individual titles in this 36-minute concerto. Each title serves as a poetic impulse for each movement.

Compared with his other violin concertos, this work's texture is lighter, with an instrumentation of two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, three trumpets, three trombones, a tuba, percussion and lower strings (cellos and double basses) only,<sup>104</sup> thus highlighting the uniqueness of the solo violin sounds that imitate different Chinese instruments. The titles of the movements in capitals are the original Chinese names for the trigrams, while the titles in italics are only subtitles for the various movements.

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<sup>103</sup> Richard Wilhelm and Cary Baynes, *The I Ching or Book of Changes* (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1950), xxix.

<sup>104</sup> Australian Music Centre, "Larry Sitsky's *I Ching* violin concerto," *Australian Music Centre Online* [home page on-line]; available from <http://www.amcoz.com.au/opac/Detail.aspx?id=3422>; Internet; accessed 3 August 2005.

Sitsky spent his first sixteen years in China, and was exposed to different types of Chinese music. Among them, the Beijing operas and sacred temple music influenced him the most:

I really fell in love with Chinese opera. I used to sneak off and hear as much of it as I could.<sup>105</sup>

I was fascinated by Chinese opera and whether I knew it or not it tended to appear in my music. It wasn't a conscious exercise.<sup>106</sup>

Sitsky did not deliberately replicate the Chinese music he had heard in China, but rather his score is the end-product of Chinese music that “filtered” through his mind. He intended to make use of the solo violin as a “voice” to give the music a particular Chinese emotional affect as an imagination of the universe and an expression of harmony between the material and spiritual world. To him, music is a purely technical process that would have been anathema to an ancient Chinese musician.<sup>107</sup>

In the music, Sitsky made use of the “Chinese” version of string *portamento* and vibrato with accompanying percussive support in different parts of the work to imitate the sound of two-stringed instruments: the high-pitched *Jinghu* and the medium-pitched mellow-sounding *Erhu*. Two-stringed fiddles exist in many varieties in China, the *Jinghu* and *Erhu* are two of the most commonly used bowed-string instruments (See fig. 2.3), the bodies and bows are made from bamboo and both pairs of strings are tuned a perfect fifth apart, with the horse-hair bows running between the pairs of strings.<sup>108</sup>

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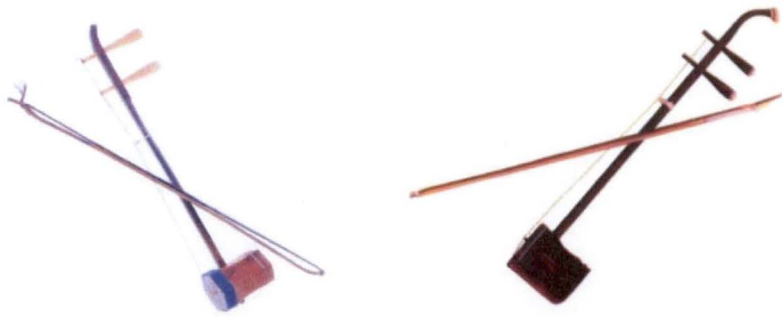
<sup>105</sup> Jehane Sharah, “Larry Sitsky,” *City News* (Canberra), 24 September 2003.

<sup>106</sup> *Sunday Tasmania* (Hobart), 10 October 2004.

<sup>107</sup> Ka Wong, *Personal Interview with Larry Sitsky* (conducted: October 18, 2006).

<sup>108</sup> Alan Thrasher, *Chinese Musical Instruments* (Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, 2000), 63.

Fig. 2.3: *Jinghu* (left) and *Erhu*<sup>109</sup>



A large number of *Portamenti* and vibrato have been used in Sitsk's *I Ching* violin concerto and the performer should note each of these technical aspect carefully in this chapter and try to imitate the sound of these exotic musical instruments.

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<sup>109</sup> Chinese Musical Instruments, "Jinghu and Erhu," *Chinese Musical Instruments Online* [home page on-line]; available from <http://stud.sjsmit.edu.tw/~g235/cmusicpicture/index1.html>; Internet; accessed 10 August 2005.



## 2.3 *I Ching* violin concerto – technical approaches to performance

The eight distinctive movements (See fig. 2.4) of the concerto represent different emotional states, and the performer should have a good imaginative grasp of both the various movements and the concerto as a whole. Effective bowing and fingering as well as detailed analysis of *I Ching* violin concert will be shown in part 2.3.1 to 2.3.8.

Fig. 2.4: The eight movements of Larry Sitsky's *I Ching* violin concerto

### ***I Ching* violin concerto**

1. WATER: *Recitative*
2. WIND: *Dance*
3. MOUNTAIN: *Aria*
4. THUNDER: *Prelude and Canons*
5. MIST: *Nocturnal*
6. HEAVEN: *Perpetual Motion*
7. FIRE: *Chant*
8. EARTH: *Accompanied Cadenza*

### 2.3.1 First movement – WATER: *Recitative*

The first movement is given the title WATER: *Recitative*. The water in *I Ching* philosophy does not just represent the water we drink or use everyday, it symbolizes the “Soul” that is between heaven and earth, the spirit and the body. It can also be interpreted as a series of different states such as “mysterious”, “profound”, “meaningful”, “dangerous” and “difficult” in Chinese understanding. The Chinese nation believes that water comes from heaven. This belief can clearly be shown in the first two verses of the ancient poem *Jiang Jin Jiu* (“Bringing in the Wine”) by the Tang Dynasty poet Li Bai.

See how the Yellow River’s waters move out of heaven.

Entering the ocean, never to return.<sup>110</sup>

Therefore, the water/soul in *I Ching* is like a river. It has to flow from the source (the rain in the sky) to the mountain and the tiny streams that will join together to form a river that flows from the mountain to the sea.

The first movement is marked by Sitsky as *molto espressivo*, thus an expressive and peaceful manner will help create the sound intended by the composer. Although the speed is indicated as “very freely,” one should be aware that the music is designed for a peaceful state, thus any speed faster than *moderato* should be avoided. The first three notes are critical in creating a “calm” state (See fig. 2.5a). In Fig. 2.5b, an increase in expression is necessary with the performer’s wrist and arm free from

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<sup>110</sup> Chinese Classics and Translations, “300 Tang Poems” *Chinese Classics and Translations Online* [home page on-line]; available from <http://afpc.asso.fr/wengu/wg/wengu.php?l=Tangshi&no=85> ; Internet; accessed 3 July 2006.

tension. The first *portamento* is used to link the first and second bars. The minim e' is sounded first and the bow stroke after the change of position quickly moves, rises through the d'' (in first position) to the f#'' on the A string. One should focus on the e'' notes instead of f#'' on the first beat of bar 2. A slight acceleration on the note will help to highlight the first f#'' of bar two. The performer should slightly increase pressure of the third finger of the left hand when applying the slide. This is a clear example of *portamento* within the interval of a third using the same fingering.

Fig. 2.5a: First movement, ms. 1-2 (Larry Sitsky's notation).

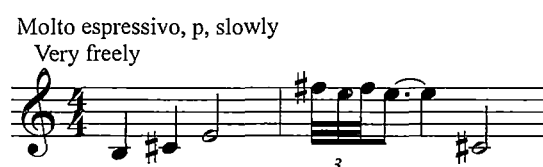


Fig. 2.5b: First movement, ms. 1-2 (Ka Wong's version).



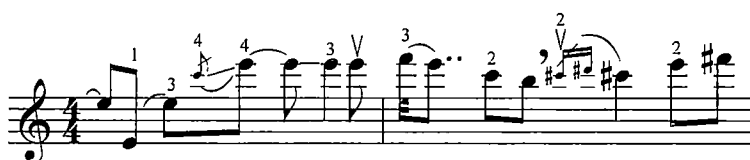
The same principle can be applied between the second and third beats of bar 4 of this movement. In bar 5 (See fig. 2.6a) , after playing the suspended e'' from the last bar, one should use the first finger to play the next lower e' (first position on D string) and then open the hands widely to extend the fingers for playing the consecutive octaves of the second beat. The performer should place the thumb midway between the first position and fourth position on the side of the fingerboard to create a comfortable posture for the left hand. An upward *portamento*, starting from c''' should be added between the e'' to e''' before the *portamento* between the same note (e''' to e''') on the

third beat, as shown in Fig. 2.6b. One should ensure the *portamento* only starts very slightly from c''' to e''' with increasing bow speed and finger pressure. A too obvious and wide ranging *portamento* will damage the “mysterious” effect intended by Sitsky.

Fig. 2.6a: First movement, ms. 5-6 (Larry Sitsky’s notation).



Fig. 2.6b: First movement, ms. 5-6 (Ka Wong’s version).

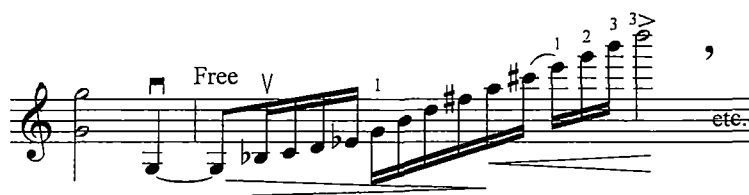


Sitsky has marked the word “Free” above the first note of bar 33 (See fig. 2.7a). This *tempo rubato* indication allows the player to flexibly manage the speed of this bar. Each of the semiquavers after the tied quaver is to be played with different bow strokes (See fig. 2.7b). The tied g should be played slowly on the open string and the performer should add *accelerando* when applying the *diminuendo* from lower g to a'' and then include a *rallentando* when playing the *crescendo* from a'' to the minim d'''. The bow pressure should stay the same while playing bar 33, the dynamic difference achieved by applying different lengths of bow stroke to the note.

Fig. 2.7a: First movement, ms. 32-33 (Larry Sitsky’s notation).



Fig. 2.7b: First movement, ms. 32-33 (Ka Wong's version).

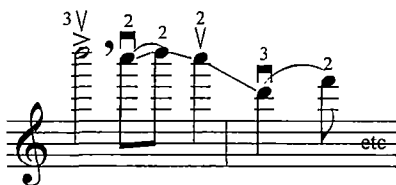


Sitsky has used a “comma” after the minim to separate the music that follows (See fig. 2.8a). A *portamento* then appears immediately after the comma. The same finger should be used to play the *portamento* between c''' to d''' as shown in Fig. 2.8b. Each of these three notes should include a *vibrato* before applying the slide and the finger should relax before stretching up on the string to the d''' note above the c'''. In this way, the player can produce a typical Chinese fiddle (*erhu*) sound.

Fig. 2.8a: First movement, ms. 33-34 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



Fig. 2.8b: First movement, ms. 33-34 (Ka Wong's version).



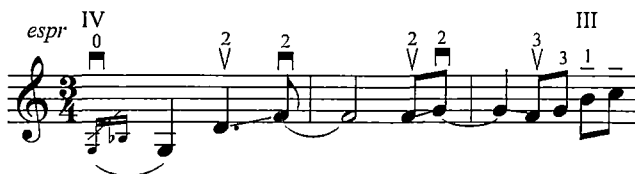
The second half of the first movement is very expressive as indicated in Fig. 2.9a. Sitsky indicated the player to perform a double *acciaccatura* before the open string g at the beginning of bar 42. The music is performed on the G string to create a sombre effect (See fig. 2.9b). The ornaments sound softly before shifting the hand to the third

position of the G string, with the second finger playing the d' note. The second finger then shifts up to the fifth position, and presses firmly with vibrato on the f' note that is suspended to the next bar. In bar 43, an upward *portamento* is needed with the second finger sliding up to one whole tone above itself from f' to g'. In the second beat of bar 44, a different finger should be used when sliding downward back from g' to f'. The *vibrato* of the crotchet g' in bar 44 should last for about three-quarters of its note value before applying the *portamento* at the last quarter value of this note. The second finger should lead its way back to a new position, the downward *portamento* here does not necessary stop exactly at the f' of the second beat, but can slide a little further downward before the third finger find its way to play the f' of the second beat from sixth position to the fourth position.

Fig. 2.9a: First movement, ms. 42-44 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



Fig. 2.9b: First movement, ms. 42-44 (Ka Wong's version).



Successive octave leaps in violin playing is one of the most challenging techniques for performers. Good coordination of left hand and bowing plus suitable fingering and dynamics can greatly enhance stylistic performance. An example that employed such technique is shown in Fig. 2.10a. Here the lowest tied  $g^\sharp$  is played with the first

finger following by the third finger in the  $g^{\sharp'}$  quaver. Normally, the first and the fourth fingers are used consecutively when playing octaves. However, to ensure an easier way to obtain the note “in tune” and a proper shifting up to higher position, the performer should use the third finger instead of the fourth. When applying this technique, the third finger should be used as a median point allowing the performer to play the next  $g^{\sharp''}$  more naturally. The *portamento* is achieved by playing its previous note  $g$  using the second finger and at the same time touches its upper a semitone using the third finger before sliding up with increasing pressure before employing vibrato on the last quaver of bar 21. This is one of the most common violin *portamento* that borrowed from *erhu* techniques shown in Fig. 2.10b.

Fig. 2.10a: First movement, ms. 20-21 (Larry Sitsky’s notation).



Fig. 2.10b: First movement, ms. 20-21 (Ka Wong’s version).



Another example of *portamento* that has been borrowed from *erhu* techniques is shown in bars 18-19 (See fig. 2.11a). This example consists of one note sliding to the octave higher and back to its original position. These slides are similar to the last example with the third finger applying increasing pressure on the slide from  $c^{\sharp''}$  to the upper octave (See fig. 2.11b).





### 2.3.2 Second movement – WIND: *Dance*

The second movement of the *I Ching* violin concerto, WIND: *Dance* is comparatively more percussive than the previous movement in the concerto. Various heavy percussion instruments such as timpani, bass drum, snare drum, marimba, xylophone, and sleigh bells are used throughout the entire movement and Sitsky displays great skill in composing this cross-cultural music. Borrowing the usual structure of the “Xun” School Beijing opera interlude (an instrumental cadenza), the movement starts with a short percussive passage. This passage is normally played by castanets, drums and cymbals. However, in this movement, three types of substitution instruments; timpani, bass drum, and snare drum, are being used instead to imitate the original sound produced by castanets, drums, and cymbals in Beijing operas.

Sitsky allows the solo violin melody to resemble a “lively” breeze. The rhythm (two quavers followed by four semiquavers) of the last two beats of bar 32, is taken from a typical Beijing opera interlude with some adjustment of its pitches by Sitsky (See fig. 2.13a). Pentatonic scales are used in writing Chinese music including those in Beijing operas; however, a change of key and sudden additional accidentals in the music are not common. In bars 32 to 34, Sitsky used his own melody together with traditional Beijing opera rhythm to create an innovative musical line. (See fig. 2.13a and 2.13b).

Fig. 2.13a: Second movement, ms. 31-34 (Larry Sitsky’s notation).

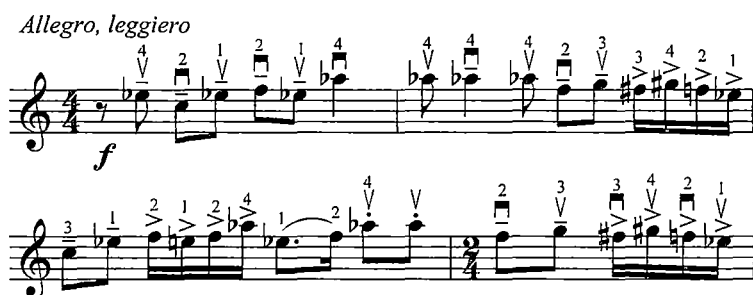


Fig. 2.13b: Second movement, ms. 31-34 (Usual Beijing opera version).



When interpreting the solo music of the violin in bars 31-34, the performer should bear in mind that the consecutive semiquavers should be played with “strong” accents, while all other notes should be played with “slight” accents (See fig. 2.13c). Moreover, each of the notes in these bars has to be performed using separate “short” bows on the string, so as to create a bouncing effect of this dance movement.

Fig. 2.13c: Second movement, ms. 31-34 (Ka Wong’s version).



The alteration of traditional pitches does not just appear in the above example; additional accidentals were added in Sitsky’s notation. (See fig. 2.14a and b) to distinguish this music from other traditional Chinese music.

Fig. 2.14a: Second movement, ms. 35-41 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



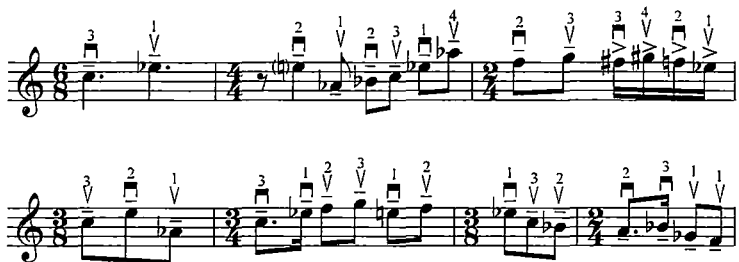
Fig. 2.14b:

Second movement, ms. 35-41 (Pitches typically used in Beijing opera melody).



Aside from having Chinese musical elements in this work, Sitsky has used different time signatures in every bar making it both like a traditional Chinese work yet also liked modern Western music. Standard Beijing operas use duple or quadruple time in composition, however, the composer constantly switches from one time signature to another, making it a demonstrable model of a cross-cultural “dance.” Fig. 2.14c shows some useful fingering and bow for this extract.

Fig. 2.14c: Second movement, ms. 35-41 (Ka Wong's version).



In playing this fast-paced “wind” movement, the performer should be aware of the economic and practical use of fingering to achieve better performance results. Below are some useful fingering of different excerpts. In bars 64-67 (See fig. 2.15a), the starting note c<sup>#</sup> should be played by the second finger in the first position on A string. A violinist normally uses 2-1-4-3 fingering to play the four semiquaver of the first beat of bar 64. However, to make the music flow smoothly with maximum comfort for the performer’s left hand, a 2-1-3-2 fingering should be employed.

To do this, the performer can simply treat both flattened notes,  $a\flat$  and  $g\flat$  as their enharmonic equivalents,  $g\sharp$  and  $f\sharp$  and use the third and second fingers to play these consecutive notes. This is to ensure unnecessary shifts of position as well as placing the left hand comfortably on the fingerboard. Fig. 2.15b illustrates the author's suggestions of fingerings. The brackets marked (i) show that the open hand posture should be used to perform the notes whereas those marked in (ii), the hand should stay in its closed posture. By doing this, the performer can obtain a more homogenous sound quality in a *leggiero* manner required by the composer.

Fig. 2.15a: Second movement, ms. 64-67 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



Fig. 2.15b: Second movement, ms. 64-67 (Ka Wong's version).



When dealing with octave shifts (See fig. 2.16a), finger octave 1-3 can be used as showed in bar 70-71 of Fig. 2.16b. Yet, the performer should be careful with the third finger used in playing the first note of bar 71. This finger should first play the note  $d^{\sharp'''}$  gently and then immediately gain strength to shift up a minor third to the next note  $f^{\sharp'''}$ . This *portamento* using the same finger imitates the sound of *erhu* commonly used in Chinese music.

The double *acciaccature* at the end of bar 71 should be played as clearly as possible, to do this, I would suggest using finger octave (4-2) when playing the dotted quaver and the first acciaccatura (Fig. 2.16b). The performer should add another slide in bar 73 between the octave to create similar effect. However, the traditional octave fingering should not be considered here because of the additional slide. Here the third finger should play the  $a^b''$  in half of its original value (that is a semiquaver) and the fourth finger playing the next additional  $e'''$  as the remaining semiquaver before sliding up to the  $a^b'''$ . The performer should make sure a flexible movement of right arm to produce music with a frequent change of strings in this extract.

Fig. 2.16a: Second movement, ms. 70-74 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



Fig. 2.16b: Second movement, ms. 70-74 (Ka Wong's version).



In several instance in this movement, the composer has employed quintuplets and sextuplets using a compound time signature. One such example is shown in bar 91 (See fig. 2.17a) where a repeated  $b\flat$  is grouped into a quintuplet and a sextuplet. The repeated notes have to have different sound qualities in order to make it more interesting and colourful. Since there is no indication of bowing in the movement, the extract can be played using different bowing patterns. My suggested bowing to these quintuplet and sextuplet passages is shown in Fig. 2.17b and the first semiquaver of each beat should be stressed using bow pressure.

Fig. 2.17a: Second movement, m. 91 (Larry Sitsky's notation).

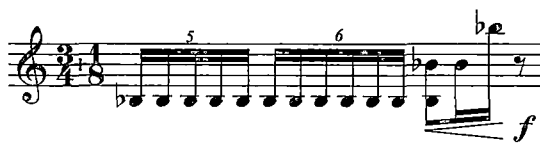
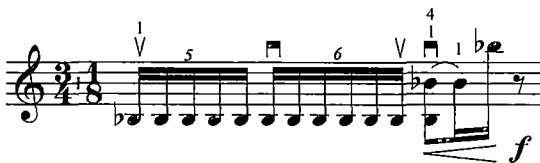


Fig. 2.17b: Second movement, m. 91 (Ka Wong's version).



Below are some useful fingering for a performer when playing quintuplets in this work. The first three  $g\flat$  in bar 95 (See fig. 2.18a) have to be performed with alternate fingers so that a cleaner sound can be obtained (See fig. 2.18b). Each set of the two quintuplets uses one single bow-stroke in the second position. The number of hand shifts need to be reduced to a minimum, again to create fluent and flowing music at such a quick tempo.

Fig. 2.18a: Second movement, m. 95 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



Fig. 2.18b: Second movement, m. 95 (Ka Wong's version).



Towards the last four bars of this movement, the performer ought to include intensified Chinese inflection to the music. Two *portamenti* are added in bars 165 and 168 (See fig. 2.19a) However, the use of fingerings and the way the musical slide sounds here is quite different from those mentioned earlier in this paper. In bar 165 (See fig. 2.19b), the finger should first stay in its first position on the first beat. A slide is to be played on the second beat in second position by adding a semitone lower than its beginning note,  $a^b$  and then sliding it up to  $c''$  using the second finger. After the slide, the finger is then moved to fifth position high up on the D string. By doing this, the fingers can play the next semiquavers of bar 166 without shifting position. The time signature of the last two bars is changed to 3/8 with the first note being played in the seventh position on the A string. A similar system of fingering (as in bar 165) is used to perform the last *portamento* reaching the high  $c'''$  with a *crescendo* in this movement giving a final touch of Chinese flavour.

Fig. 2.19a: Second movement, ms. 165-168 (Larry Sitsky’s notation).



Fig. 2.19b: Second movement, ms. 165-168 (Ka Wong’s version).





### 2.3.3 Third movement – MOUNTAIN: *Aria*

In the third movement MOUNTAIN: *Aria*, Sitsky evokes a typical cloudy and foggy mountainous landscape of central China where the five famous mountains; *Tai Shan*, *Hua Shan*, *Heng Shan*, *Huan Shan* and *Song Shan* are located. Traditionally, mountains, in the mind of most Chinese people, are sacred places to visit. Most Taoist temples were built high up on mountains where Taoism monks live in order to retreat from the secular world to pursue spiritual studies. These monks believe that they should go through the process of long-term self-discipline in isolation before becoming an immortal prepared to ascend to Heaven. In the theory of *I Ching*, “Mountain” represents the states of stillness, meditation and tranquility; just the same emotional states as Taoist monks pursue when meditating in isolation in temples atop mountains.

To create these meditative and tranquil atmospheres, Sitsky has used a very light and transparent orchestral texture. Accompanied by gloomy and reverberating music for the orchestra, the violin sings its extremely poignant aria at a slow pace. Sitsky did not use time signatures nor bar lines in this movement, and allows the performer to express the music freely. There are a number of extracts which the performer should note carefully in order to carefully project the special qualities of this music.

The first several notes are extremely important in conveying the mood of the entire movement. The wide-ranging solo melody, played by the solo violin (See fig. 2.20a), is as evocative as a visual drawing of mountains. The composer has added slow *portamenti* to the melody similar to those used in vocal music of regional theatres in

China. The first two notes are two octaves apart (from  $g^\sharp$  to  $g^\sharp{}''$ ). To make the music sound more like traditional Chinese vocal music, an additional  $c^\sharp{}''$  should be placed between them (Fig. 2.20b). The performer should to play the  $g^\sharp$  first with up-bow and then immediately should move the bow from the G string to A string without pressure playing the  $c^\sharp{}''$ . After that, a slide should be applied to the next dotted quaver  $g^\sharp{}''$  while increasing bow pressure and speed. The *portamento* here should be played slower than those in the second movement to create a vocal-like sound. The second finger then employs *vibrato* as it reaches the dotted quaver. This extended *portamento* used here not only resembles vocal music sung in regional theatres but is also very similar to the musical effects and techniques being employed by *guqin*, a Chinese ancient plucked-string instrument.

The *portamento* immediately after the semiquaver triplets in system 1 (See fig. 2.20b) should be treated with caution. But, in this particular case, because the notes between the *portamento* are only one tone apart, the wrist can be used to lead the second finger to the  $c^\sharp{}''$  after the semiquaver triplets instead of being guided by the forearm. The wrist should be very relaxed before this motion in order to direct the second finger to its right note. A similar method can be used to play the last *portamento* of the extract involving the second finger sliding up to the tied note a semitone higher than the *acciaccatura*.

Fig. 2.20a: Third movement, sys. 1 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



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The first system of the musical score is written on a single staff. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody starts with a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, and then a quarter note B4. This is followed by a quarter rest, then a quarter note C5, and a quarter note D5. The next measure contains a quarter note E5, a quarter note F#5, and a quarter note G5. The final measure of the system contains a quarter note A5, a quarter note B5, and a quarter note C6. Above the staff, there are several annotations: a '2' above the first measure, a '3' above the second measure, a '3' above the third measure, a '2' above the fourth measure, a '3' above the fifth measure, a '2' above the sixth measure, and a '2' above the seventh measure. There are also some handwritten-style markings above the staff, including 'II' and 'III'.

Another kind of *portamento* appears between the last two quavers of the triplet near the end of this system. This *portamento* should be played with increasing pressure of both the finger and the bow, building up an *un poco crescendo* on the last quaver of the triplet towards the crotchet with *fermata*.

Technically speaking, it is not difficult to perform system 4 (See fig. 2.22a), but an appropriate musical style should be incorporated carefully here. A number of *portamenti* need to be added to this extract (See fig. 2.22b) to add Chinese character to the music. Again these slow *portamenti* are mostly played on the A string and they could be achieved by sliding the same finger with the same bowing, increasing finger pressure and bow speed, and building a crescendo in the process of sliding. The tasteful use of *portamento* accompanied by crescendo is not a modern technique. Early violin master François-Antoine Habeneck has referenced the use of such a technique.<sup>111</sup>

In the matter of bow changes, wrist, fingers and knuckles should be as flexible as possible before fluent bowing can be achieved.<sup>112</sup> For the first three notes of this system, a rotation of the right wrist is used immediately after playing the minim and the wrist is back to its original position after playing the g<sup>#</sup>' quaver. A similar method is used when playing the latter half of this extract where the highest c<sup>#</sup>''' quaver and its lower octave c<sup>#</sup>''' crotchet played on E string falls to the lower octave c<sup>#</sup>'''. To play this, the wrist and the shoulder must relax while the wrist rotates again to its left side so that the bow can catch the A string and play the quaver quickly before changing it back to the E string and continuing with the remaining melody.

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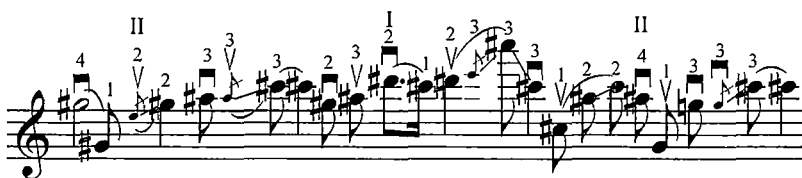
<sup>111</sup> Robin Stowell, John Butt and Laurence Dreyfus, *Violin Technique and Performance Practice in the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 99-100.

<sup>112</sup> Robin Stowell, *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 106-107.

Fig. 2.22a: Third movement, sys. 4 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



Fig. 2.22b: Third movement, sys. 4 (Ka Wong's version).



Towards the middle section of the movement, additional *portamenti* are needed to maintain the uniquely poignant Chinese atmosphere in the music. In system 5 (See fig. 2.23a) the performer should add a *portamento* between the c<sup>#</sup>" crotchet and the tied c<sup>#</sup>" minim (See fig. 2.23b). Since the pitch of these two notes is the same, the *portamento* should be placed between them a semitone lower than this pitch. To play this note, the performer should use the second finger to play the c<sup>#</sup>" crotchet and then use the first finger to present the *portamento* to slide up to the tied minim flexibly. This is a typical performance technique borrowed from erhu music that evokes a unique regional music language. To prepare the next *portamento* after the tied c<sup>#</sup>" note, the performer should first open the left hand and use (1-3) octave fingering and play the tied c<sup>#</sup>" and the c<sup>b</sup>" *acciaccatura* simultaneously even though the interval is a diminished and not a perfect octave. The performer can ensure a smooth, elastic and expressive *erhu*-like melody using (1-3) octave fingering here. Similar to the previous examples, to create erhu and regional theatre vocal music effect, the *portamento* right after the comma should be played with increasing finger pressure and bow speed as if seeking to create a "yawning" sound with *crescendo*. The next *portamento*, a dotted



Fig. 2.24a: Third movement, sys. 8 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



### 2.3.4 Fourth movement – THUNDER: *Prelude and Canons*

The fourth movement is titled THUNDER: *Prelude and Canons*. To many people, thunder is shocking however, in the philosophy of *I Ching*, thunder is interpreted as a series of conditions such as “arousing,” “excitement” and “growth.”<sup>113</sup> A short, brassy and majestic *prelude* performed by the orchestra, is first heard imitating the sound of thunder. A lonesome and expressive violin melody then appears presenting an adapted Chinese melody. The *Canons* emerge in the central part of the movement with flute, violin and horn playing canonic melodies one after the other. The initial brassy passage returns before closing this movement.

The performer should evoke a solitary and playful atmosphere when performing this movement. The solitary melody is an adapted Chinese melody, as shown in Fig. 25a. To lend the music more Chinese character, Sitsky has created a melody cross-cultural melody. Bars 27 and 28 of Fig. 2.25b resemble the melody of the last two measure of the famous Chinese folk tune *Mo Li Hua* (“Jasmine Flower”) as shown in Fig. 2.25c.

Fig. 2.25a: Fourth movement, ms. 22-28 (Larry Sitsky’s notation).



<sup>113</sup> R. L. Wing, *The Illustrated I Ching* (New York: Mainstreet Book, 1982), 15.



Fig. 2.25b:

Fourth movement, ms. 22-28 (Pitches typically used in Chinese melody).



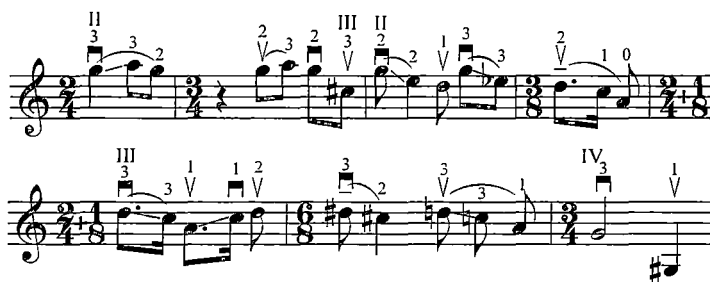
Fig. 2.25c:

Traditional Chinese melody *Mo Li Hua*, ms. 11-14.



To make the music more Chinese in style, Sitsky has again used many *portamenti* in this movement. Fig. 2.25a shows a number of *portamenti* indicated by Sitsky. To play this part of the concerto effectively, the performer should first try to play the initial “Chinese” melody as shown in Fig. 2.25b. After obtaining the essential character from the original “Chinese” music, the performer can then apply the altered pitches that Sitsky indicates in the score and play the *portamenti* using the suggested fingering that appears in Fig. 2.25d.

Fig. 2.25d: Fourth movement, ms. 22-28 (Ka Wong’s version).



This extract, showing bars 22 to 28 of movement 4 is mostly played on the A string to avoid frequent string crossings. First of all, the player should play the crotchet g" using the third finger in the fourth position on the A string. The upward *portamento* in bar 22 is applied using the third finger with increasing finger pressure and bow speed creating a slight *crescendo* when sliding up to the quaver a". A similar method is applied on the *portamento* in bar 24 using the second finger between the quaver g" and crotchet e" emphasizing the crotchet note of this bar.

The performer should open and stretch the left hand immediately after playing the quaver d" in the fourth position and fingering the quaver g" of the third beat with the third finger. The reason for stretching the left hand after playing d" is to avoid using the fourth finger to play any *portamento* in such a lyrical and expressive passage. The reason becomes even more obvious when the note is immediately followed by a slide. Thus, when playing Chinese *portamento* on the violin, the performer should avoid using the fourth finger when playing the slides.

The next three notes in bar 25 are performed in the second position with the last note intentionally played on the open A string, thus allowing the third finger to find its way to sixth position on the D string. The next two bars should be fully imbued with Chinese style. To create an essential Chinese tone colour, the performer should play these two bars on the D string rather than on the A string. The treatment of *portamenti* in bars 26-27 should be the same as those being used in bars 22 and 24 respectively.

Chromatically modified pentatonic Chinese melody can also be found in the next sample. Fig. 2.26a shows Sitsky's melody from bars 38-45. When the accidentals of the music in these bars are taken out, as shown in Fig. 2.26b, the music immediately

turns into a “typical” Chinese melody with its strong pentatonic pitch structure. Thus the cross-cultural music is clearly shown in Sitsky’s work again through complex referencing of different pitch sets.

Fig. 2.26a: Fourth movement, ms. 38-45 (Larry Sitsky’s notation).



Fig. 2.26b: Fourth movement, ms. 38-45

(Pentatonic pitch connection typically used in Chinese melody).

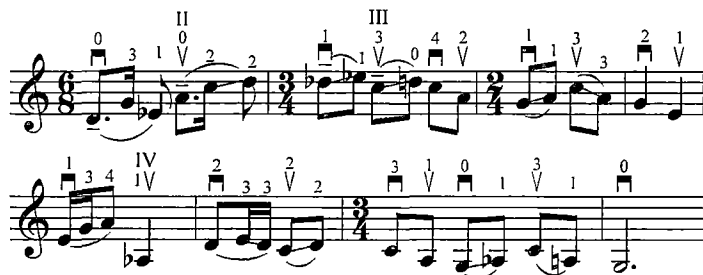


Like Fig. 2.25c, Sisky intends the performer to frequently demonstrate their *portamento* technique from bars 38-45. In this excerpt, there are recurrent *portamenti* a major second apart using the same fingering (See fig. 2.26c). The application is the same as those appearing in the previous extracts, that is, the *portamenti* need to be played with increasing finger pressure together with increasing bow speed. The use of such *portamenti* is very similar to that of Carl Flesch’s Theory on *Portamento*. The L-portamento is played with the last finger sliding from an additional intermediate note, which uses the same finger and same bow-stroke.<sup>114</sup> The left hand here needs to

<sup>114</sup> Robin Stowell, *The Cambridge Companion to the Violin* (Melbourne: Cambridge University Press., 1992), 128.

shift its position frequently on the fingerboard; therefore, the performer must make sure that the left forearm and wrist are free from tension.

Fig. 2.26c: Fourth movement, ms. 38-45 (Ka Wong's version).



When playing the second beat of bar 39, the player should relax the third finger when applying the *portamento* from c" to d♯" and then immediately stretch the finger to produce a harmonic note upon completing the sliding movement.

In bar 44, the *portamento* is applied from an open string up an interval of a minor second. To play this effectively, the performer must first place the left hand in first position on the fingerboard and lift the first finger up before slightly touching the G string. Immediately after the open g is sounded, it is necessary to touch the G string and then stretch the first finger to the a♭ following it. This motion should only involve the movement of the left hand finger instead of the left forearm or wrist.

Unlike those in the previous extract, the three repeated *portamenti* between bars 90-92 involve a big leap as shown in Sitsky's score (Fig. 2.27a). Sitsky uses an upward curved line with an arrow to show all of his intended *portamenti*.

Fig. 2.27a: Fourth movement, ms. 90-92 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



In recent decades, some renowned Chinese composers, such as Tan Dun, Chen Yi and Zhou Long have used short straight lines between the sliding notes to represent Chinese *portamento*, a typical technique used in *erhu* or *jianhu* music. Moreover, when there is a great leap between the notes, a small acciaccatura will appear to suggest from which note the performer should start the sliding motion. A proper way of writing the above extract should be as shown in Fig. 2.27b. An  $b\flat'$  acciaccatura is placed between each of the octave intervals and is to be played on the D string. Each of the three *portamenti* should start right after the  $d\flat'$  quaver is sounded on the G string. The bow then changes to the D string without altering its direction. The third finger is then placed in the fifth position of the D string to allow the slide up to the  $d\flat''$  crotchet immediately. The performer should not disregard the need to apply increasing finger pressure and bow speed while sliding as well as using vibrato once the finger reaches the upper note ( $d\flat''$ ).

Fig. 2.27b: Fourth movement, ms. 90-92 (Ka Wong's version).



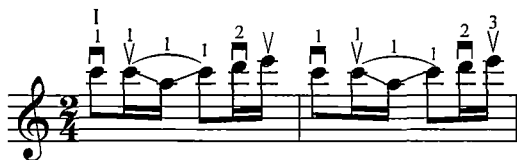
As in the preceding extract, Sitsky uses a long curved line with an arrow to represent *portamento* (See fig. 2.28a) in bars 112 to 113 of the fourth movement.

Fig. 2.28a: Fourth movement, ms. 112-113 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



To notate the music properly and clearly, the *portamenti* are shown using small straight lines (See fig. 2.28b). In the following extract, the *portamenti* are applied using the first finger within one bow stroke in each bar. In bar 112, the player must slide from the semiquaver c''' to the lower a'' semiquaver before gliding back to the quaver c''' on the second beat. The *portamento* method used here is again borrowed from *erhu* and *jinghu* techniques, making the music sound in a Chinese manner. This is again done in a simple way, using just wrist and finger movement and not employing any movement of the forearm.

Fig. 2.28b: Fourth movement, ms. 112-113 (Ka Wong's version).



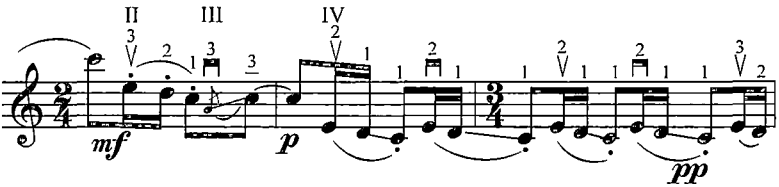
Different to those that occur in bars 90 to 92, the *portamenti* between bars 128 to 130 (See fig. 2.29a) feature recurring downward slides.

Fig. 2.29a: Fourth movement, ms. 128-130 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



A formal notation is shown in Fig. 2.29b with the original curved line being changed to short a straight line. An acciaccatura (a') is placed between the two quavers of the second beat in bar 128 because the music deals with the slide between two identical notes. The acciaccatura is performed with the third finger that slides up to the c'' a minor third above it. The other four *portamenti* between bars 128 to 130 are done without shifting position because they are recurring *portamenti* of one tone apart. The slide between the semiquaver d' and quaver c' should be played by individual movement of the first finger joint and wrist without any movement of forearm, thus making the music more easily performed.

Fig. 2.29b: Fourth movement, ms. 128-130 (Ka Wong's version).



### 2.3.5 Fifth movement – MIST: *Nocturnal*

The fifth movement is entitled MIST: *Nocturnal*. In the theory of *I Ching*, the English term for this element is sometimes translated to “Lake” or “Swamp”. “Mist” demonstrates external emotional states of joy, pleasure and satisfaction but at the same time bearing the inner emotional states of mystery, danger and extreme pressure.<sup>115</sup> Sitsky has employed the feelings in this movement and used “Nocturnal” as part of its name. The movement is divided into two sections. The score of the first section is notated using bar numbers with frequent changes of time signatures and regular use of Chinese *portamenti*. The second section, marked as “Rhapsodically,” starts from bar 47 and lasts through to the end of the movement. This section is notated without barlines or time signature. There are also a number of Chinese *portamenti*, some of which do not resemble music performed by the *erhu* or *jinghu*. Some of these gestures imitate the techniques being used in *guqin*. *Guqin* (literally “old long zither”) or simply *qin* (“long zither”) is a popular type of string instrument used in ancient China. It is a seven-stringed zither without bridge, with all of its strings, sound holes and set of pegs on the back of the body. Since the length of all strings in *guqin* is the same, there is no restriction on the shape of the instrument.<sup>116</sup> Sounds of *guqin* are usually produced by plucking open strings, stopped strings and harmonics. Its stopped sounds are distinguished by the variety of slides and ornaments used and the use of *glissando*.<sup>117</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> Mondo Seter, Chung-Ying Cheng, *The I Ching Handbook. decision-making with and without divination* (Berkeley: North Atlantic Books, 2002), 31.

<sup>116</sup> Lee Yuan-Yuan and Sin-Yan Shen, *Chinese Musical Instruments* (Chicago: Chinese Music Society of North America, 1999), 103.

<sup>117</sup> C. C. Evans, *Guqin Technique*, “Technique” *Guqin* [home page on-line]; available from <http://www.cechinatrans.demon.co.uk/gq-tech.html>; Internet; accessed 20 August 2006.



The mysterious mood of the movement begins with the solo cello followed by the double bass. The solo violin line then displays a solitary and threatening atmosphere in slow pace before entering the rhapsodic section. There are many Chinese *portamenti* being used in this movement to imitate the music effect of *erhu*. These slides are to be treated similarly to those specified in the third movement, ARIA: Mountain because of their similar speed and mood.

Two extracts containing slow Chinese *portamenti* in the first section are shown below as Fig. 2.30 (a and b) and Fig. 2.31 (a and b). Since the intervals between the *portamenti* are very close to each other, with a minor third or less than a minor third apart, the performer can use the same finger when applying the slide. The same bow-stroke with increasing finger pressure and bow speed should be employed to create the *poco crescendo* effect when sliding up to the next note whereas in the case of sliding down, the *poco diminuendo* should be created with decreasing finger pressure and bow stroke.

Fig. 2.30a: Fifth movement, ms. 13-14 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



Fig. 2.30b: Fifth movement, ms. 13-14 (Ka Wong's version).

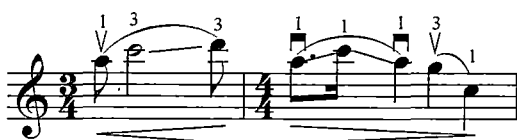
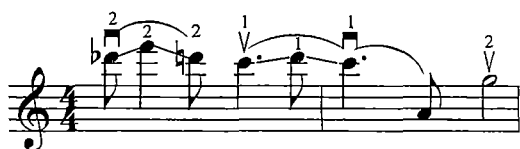


Fig. 2.31a: Fifth movement, ms. 25-26 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



Fig. 2.31b: Fifth movement, ms. 25-26 (Ka Wong's version).



As indicated by the composer, the second section of this movement is to be played rhapsodically and is notated without the use of bar lines. Since this music indication is similar to those in the third movement, therefore, I am showing each line on the score as a “system”. The first system begins on the second line of the “rhapsodically” section.

Sitsky employs a lot of double melodic acciaccature as well as double harmonic acciaccature to embellish the music of the second section. The solo violin does not only imitate the sound of *erhu*, sometimes it resembles music of *guqin*. Fig. 2.32a, as appears on system 6 of the movement contains one of such examples. This extract contains four *portamenti*, the first one is prefixed with an acciaccatura whereas the other three *portamenti* are shown only with upward or downward arrows immediately before the given notes.

Fig. 2.32a: Fifth movement, sys. 6 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



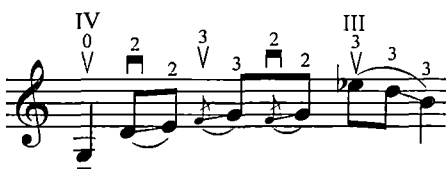


Fig. 2.33a: Fifth movement, sys. 7 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



Fig. 2.33b is a more comprehensible version for performers to follow. The first note of this extract should be played with the lowest open string. After the first note is sounded, the hand should move to the third position of the same string with the second finger playing the quaver d'. The same finger is then used to slide up to the quaver e' in the fourth position. The third finger then logically plays the acciaccatura f' and slides up to the quaver g' in sixth position with the same finger. The next *portamento* is then played with the second finger sliding from acciaccatura f' to the quaver g'. The reason for keeping these *portamenti* on the more resonance G string is to create a sound similar to the *erhu*. Although the pitches and note-value of the previous *portamenti* are the same, the use of different fingering makes it possible for the third finger to slide to the next *portamento* on the D string more effectively. In the original version, Sitsky has put an arrow over the group of three downward melodic notes of the extract; however, the performer should note that the *portamento* will only occur between the last two notes. The third finger is used to play all three notes in the group. It is shifted a semitone lower after playing the e<sup>b</sup> and then slide downward to the crotchet b'. A decreasing bow speed is used when applying the slide.

Fig. 2.33b: Fifth movement, sys. 7 (Ka Wong's version).



The imitation of *guqin* music returns in system 10 before closing this movement with a solo cello coda. Again, for some of the notes in the original score, the composer did not indicate from where the *portamenti* should start, as shown in Fig. 2.34a.

Fig. 2.34a: Fifth movement, sys. 10-11 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



To perform this extract in appropriate style, the performer should know where the *portamenti* should begin. Some of the additional *acciaccature* are added in the following extract (See fig. 2.34b) to show from where exactly the slide should begin. Despite of the usual practice of playing f " with the first finger on the E string, the second finger is used to play the first *portament* that starts from f " before sliding it up to the g ". The reason for using the second finger instead of the first is to allow the first finger to slightly touch the *acciaccatura* b' of the A string before sliding it up to the crotchet d ". The speed of this upward slide is slow with increasing finger pressure and bow speed creating a *poco crescendo*. Once the principal note is sounded, the bow speed immediately slows to produce the effect of *poco diminuendo*. The same principle is to be applied to the next two *portamenti*.

The performer should always try to employ either the second or third finger to play *portamento* because these two fingers are relatively easier to control when balancing the hand as, for example, in the fourth to eighth beats of the extract. These *portamenti* are mostly performed on the A string and D string on higher positions in order to avoid illogical shifts of position and to produce better resonance similar to the *guqin* which can the sound range from C to d ".<sup>118</sup>

<sup>118</sup> Jian Qihua and others, eds., *Zhongguo Yuegi Jieshao* [Introduction to Chinese Musical Instruments] (Beijing: People's Music Publishing House, 1997), 36.

The *decrecendo* is sensibly used by the composer towards the end of the extract for there are two descending *portamenti* in which decreasing finger pressure and bow speed is required to create *poco diminuendo*. The performer should be careful with the last *portamento* because the principal note (minim g' with fermata) is played with an extended fourth finger creating an harmonic note on the G string. An increase in finger pressure and bow speed is applied on the *accicaccatura* b once it is touched slightly. The bow speed should then slow down instantaneously to let the music fade out while the *femata* lasts.

Fig. 2.34b: Fifth movement, sys. 10-11 (Ka Wong's version).



### 2.3.6 Sixth movement – HEAVEN : *Perpetual Motion*

The sixth movement is given the title HEAVEN: *Perpetual Motion*. To many people, heaven is one of the resting places for mankind after death. Many religions believe that a good person will enter heaven whilst a wicked one will end up in hell. This universal philosophy is deeply rooted in the mind of Chinese people because both Buddhism and Taoism, the two widespread religions in China, acknowledge the existence of heaven and hell. However, in the theory of *I Ching*, the word “Heaven” does not simply indicate a resting place, rather it indicates the states of firmness, creativity, strength, force and power.<sup>119</sup> Sitsky has employed all of the above conditions in this movement. It contains frequent change of time signatures and continuous streams of quaver and semiquaver patterns. Three distinctive sections in this perpetual motion movement are presented in the movement: a concise first section that signifies the meditative low mantras of monks (bars 1-14), a more rapid and agitated second section (bars 15-69), as well as a brassy and percussive last section (bars 70 to *fine*). The violin dominates the first two sections while leaving the brass and percussion instruments to direct the music towards the end of the movement.

To reproduce this movement in appropriate style, the performer should note the following advice carefully. The movement opens with a large number of repeated violin notes with frequent change of irregular time signatures and grouping of notes (Fig. 2.35a). This extract, with no dynamic indication marked by the composer, imitates the meditative and low mantras-like sound of monks. This mantra is a secret and energetically powerful sound or chants. They are used to control and direct energy

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<sup>119</sup> R. L. Wing, *The Illustrated I Ching* (New York: Mainstreet Book, 1982), 15.

and spirits for meditative purposes.<sup>120</sup> Remembering the music he encountered in his childhood in Tianjin, China, Sitsky recalls:

I also remember monks – Taoist or Buddhist monks – I don’t know which now, sitting and reciting mantras and praying and sometimes singing, and people leaving money.<sup>121</sup>

The composer did not give any bowing indication to this movement and left very few dynamic markings on the score (See fig. 2.35a). The performer therefore needs to replicate the meditative hymn of Buddhist monks with reasonable bowing, fingering and dynamics that allows such imitation.

Fig. 2.35a: Sixth movement, ms. 1-4 (Larry Sitsky’s notation).



The *acciaccature* must sound softly and clearly before falling to the main note. In the above extract, most of the repeated notes should be played with one single bow-stroke to maintain the effect of “mantra” singing by monks. Evenness among the notes is important in making temple music as shown in Fig. 2.35b below. Fingering is not complex because the same fingering can be used to play the repeating notes. A very slight accent should fall on the first note of every rhythmic quaver group with low frequency vibrato. Thus little accents will then fall on the first and fourth quavers of bar 1, while the first and fifth quavers have to be slightly accented in bar 2.

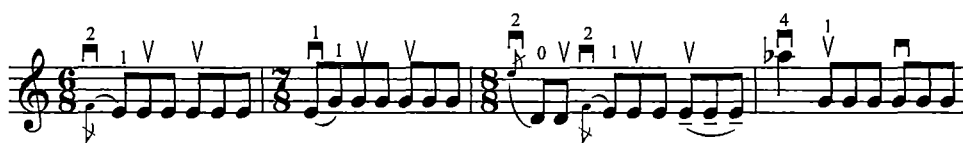
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<sup>120</sup> Brock Silvers, *The Taoist Manual. An Illustrated Guide Applying Taoism to Daily Life* (India: Sacred Mountain Press, 2005), 108.

<sup>121</sup> Jim Cotter, *Sitsky, Conversations with the Composer* (Canberra: National Library of Australia, 2004), 21.



Fig. 2.35b: Sixth movement, ms. 1-4 (Ka Wong's version).



In the restless middle section of this movement, there is one occasion where a large number of cross-stringed notes occur as shown in Fig. 2.36a. This extract quotes bars 29 to 32 of the movement which starts with the third finger playing the a' on D string. The cross-stringed notes occur intensively in bar 30 and thus the performer needs to be extra cautious with the position and angle of the left forearm in order to create smooth music.

Fig. 2.36a: Sixth movement, ms. 29-32 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



In bar 29, the left forearm should stay in a position that allows the fingers to play both the D and A string comfortably, for the notes in this bar are to be played on the D and A strings only. Continuing with the next bar, the forearm should now stay in the position where the fingers can comfortably play both the A and E string (bar 29). In doing this, the forearm and the left hand wrist will not require unnecessary hand movement. Although there are three notes to be performed on the D string (the a' quaver and the two g'' semiquavers), the forearm and finger should rest midway on the A and E strings to prepare the finger to play the first three notes of bars 31. For the a' quaver and the two g'' semiquavers on the D string in bar 30, the performer can simply stretch the fourth finger to play these notes, with the forearm staying in the A string position.

Fig. 2.36b shows some practical and logical fingerings the performer can follow. These fingerings are used to eliminate unnecessary shifts of position on the fingerboard and to allow the music to flow continuously with short separate bows. The group of eight demisemiquavers at the end of the extract is to be performed in one single bow stroke because of its short duration as well as its arpeggiated pattern. This is a very typical way of playing short note values in Western violin music.

Fig. 2.36b: Sixth movement, ms. 29-32 (Ka Wong's version).



Aside from being cautious with the forearm position, the performer needs to be aware of a useful fingering needed to perform rapid notes on high positions. Fig. 2.37a below shows the original music of bars 43-46 in this movement.

Fig. 2.37a: Sixth movement, ms. 43-46 (Larry Sitsky's notation).

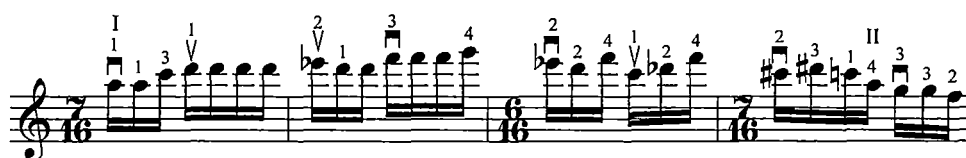


Having a series of high-pitched notes, this extract is almost entirely performed on the E string. The ascending melody somewhat evokes the ascent of someone into heaven making the music more programatic than the other movements.

The performer should start the passage with the first finger playing a semiquaver on the third position. A shift to sixth position then occurs on the fourth note of bar 43.

The finger position will stay the same until the music reaches the first note of bar 45 where a smoother 224 124 finger-pattern can be used as shown in Fig. 2.37b. To reduce unnecessary finger movement, the performer can also follow a 2314 332 finger-pattern in bar 46. This is because a stretch of the fourth finger to the adjacent lower sounding string immediately after the first finger is a common practice used by most violinists. The stretch of the second finger followed by a fourth finger in a lower string will cause, for most violinists, discomfort to the fingers and create tension in the hand.

Fig. 2.37b: Sixth movement, ms. 43-46 (Ka Wong's version).



Dominated by the solo violin, the middle section displays the states of “strength” and “creativity” that coincide with the “Heaven” philosophy of *I Ching* Theory (See fig. 2.38a).

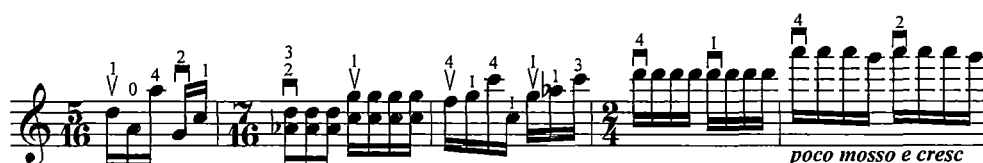
Fig. 2.38a: Sixth movement, ms. 47-51 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



To create a sharp contrast with the last brassy section, each note of the middle section can be played with separate bow-strokes whereas the last brassy section is performed with slurred bows creating a smooth accompaniment for the dominant brass and percussion instruments. Fig. 2.38b shows bars 47 to 51 of the middle section. Here

each beat is to be played with one bow-stroke including those double-stopped semiquavers in bar 48. The extract begins with the first finger playing d'' in the third position on the A string.

Fig. 2.38b: Sixth movement, ms. 47-51 (Ka Wong's version).



The use of fingering and bowing on the double-stopped semiquavers are Western in style underscoring the cross-cultural aspect of the composition. The hand position becomes higher and higher as the music flows from bars 48. A greater shift from the third position to the sixth position occurs in the repeated d''' of bar 50. The performer should make a very quick shift when changing position and make sure the note is “in tune.” A similar method can be used in the next bar where the hand shifts from the seventh position to the ninth position of the E string. Intonation is always an important aspect to judge the technical ability of any violinist, therefore the performer should make sure to play “in tune” while shifting the left hand on the fingerboard.

### 2.3.7 Seventh movement – FIRE: *Chant*

Fire: *Chant* is the longest movement of the Concerto and is filled with a steady and majestic atmosphere. In the theory of *I Ching*, “Fire” represents the states of clarity, intelligence, dependence and attachment<sup>122</sup> and the violin here displays the first two states effectively. The word “Chant” used in the title signifies the mantra-like sound of monks and the traditional music that is often performed in the Chinese temple, as Sitsky spoke of in an interview in 2006:

The seventh movement of *I Ching* Violin Concerto is all about [Chinese] temple music.<sup>123</sup>

The seventh movement begins with a majestic, woodwind-dominated section that gives the impression of a traditional religious ceremony. Many people might have the impression that Chinese temple music is simply about song utterances of monks. This is because *a cappella* singing is one of the most important daily practices of monks.<sup>124</sup> However, Chinese temple music also includes instrumental music that is taken from folk tunes and historically, the temple is the usual location where secular musicians congregate.<sup>125</sup> The solo violin first plays a chant-like, meditative melody, after a 52-bar introduction, as shown in Fig. 2.39a.

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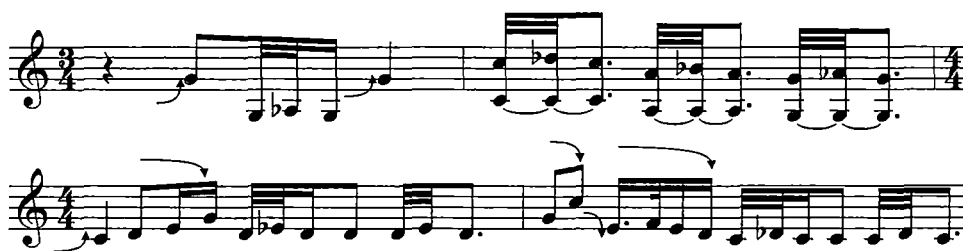
<sup>122</sup> R. L. Wing, *The I Ching Workbook* (New York: First Broadway Books, 2001), 14.

<sup>123</sup> Ka Wong, *Personal Interview with Larry Sitsky* (conducted: October 18, 2006).

<sup>124</sup> Tian Qing, *Essays on Religion Music [Zong Jiao Yingyue Juan]* (Beijing: People’s Music Publishing House, 2005), 67.

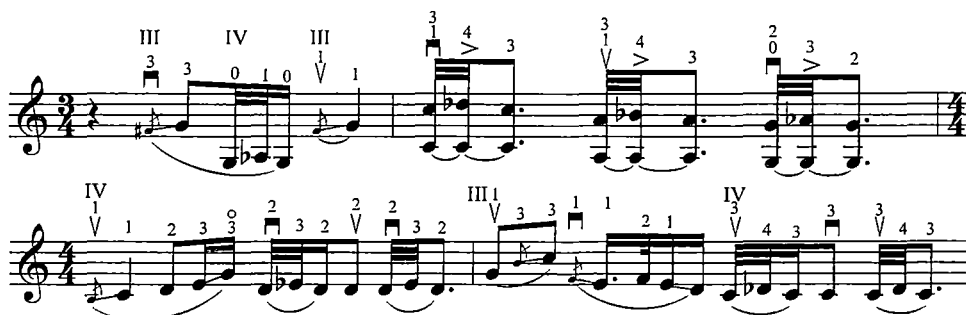
<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*, 108.

Fig. 2.39a: Seventh movement, ms. 53-56 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



Sitsky has enhanced the Chinese quality of this melody by adding a number of *portamenti* into the music. But since these *portamenti* are only presented using curved lines placed either beside or above the principal notes in his manuscript, the performer needs to be aware of where the *portamenti* should start. A realization of these *portamenti* is given in Fig. 2.39b with additional *acciaccature*. These *acciaccature* have something in common, they are placed a semitone above or below the principal note just to add focus onto the principal notes. The reason for placing these *acciaccature* in this way is to coincide with the frequently appearing upper auxiliary notes in the melody. These auxiliary notes are all written in demisemiquavers and the distance between them and their principal notes is just a semitone apart, therefore they can be simply described as an “upper mordent” – a type of ornament. The performer should play these auxiliary notes as softly as possible to create a contemplative effect.

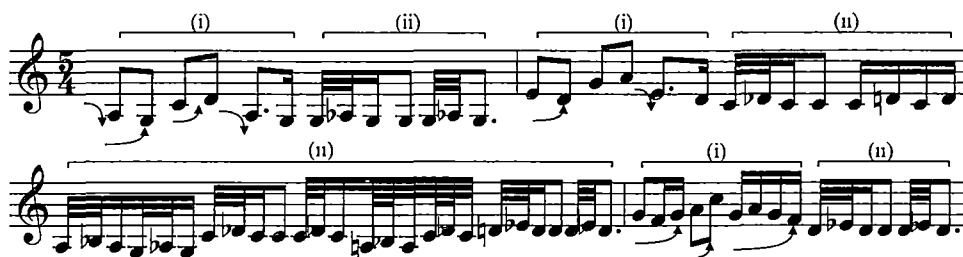
Fig. 2.39b: Seventh movement, ms. 53-56 (Ka Wong's version).



In order to perform the music with mantra-like effect, the *portamenti* in Fig. 2.39b should be played with a slight increasing finger and bow pressure. Similarly, the music in bar 55 should be played in the G string because the low register of the violin can imitate the muttering sound of mantras effectively and the last note g' of the second beat of this bar has to be played as an harmonic to create again a meditative effect. The *portamenti* should be played with the same finger except for those that involve an open string.

Bars 57-60 (See fig. 2.40a) is a continuation of the melody from the previous sample (See fig. 2.39b). It clearly shows the combination of Chinese folk tune (i) and monk's mantra (ii), with music characterized by the appearance of upper mordents as well as a number of *portamenti*.

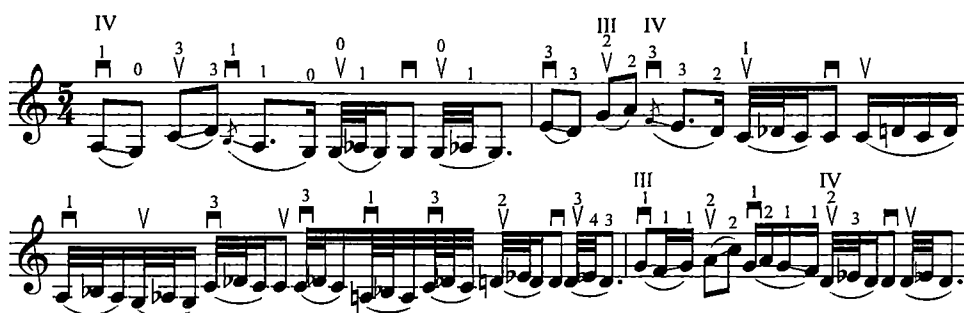
Fig. 2.40a: Seventh movement, ms. 57-60 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



The *portamenti* are edited and marked clearly in Fig. 2.40b. There are two extra *acciaccature* added to the principal notes in bars 57 and 58 because the range between these principal notes and the previous notes is quite wide. If we just place straight lines between these notes and play the slides accordingly, the resulting *portamento* effect will be too intensive and blemish the meditative mood intended by the composer. All the *portamenti* in this extract should be handled in a similar way specified in last extract (See fig. 2.39b) to create a timbrally contemplative effect.

Regarding bowing of this extract, the performer should use one bow stroke per beat or half a beat in every bar in order to correspond to the sliding effect and upper mordent patterns (See fig. 2.40b). Since bar 57 is an imitation of bar 56, the treatment of bowing in these two bars has to be the same in order to display the consistency of this music. When performing the mordents, the performer should think of imitating a soft Chinese *Dizi* sounds so as to anticipate the flute melody shortly following it.

Fig. 2.40b: Seventh movement, ms. 57-60 (Ka Wong's version).



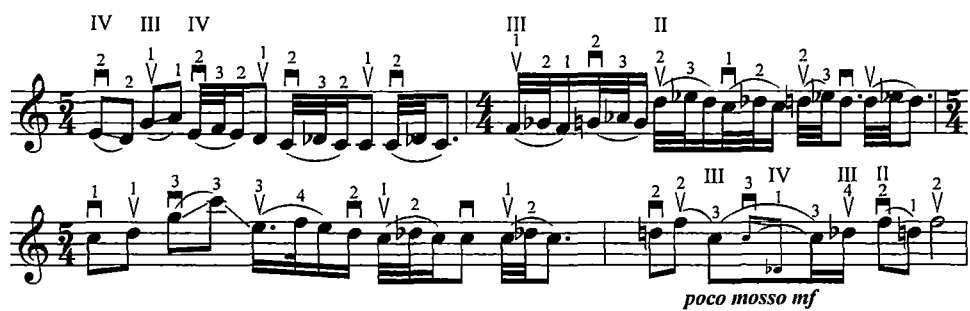
In bars 61-64, the melody is taken up by the flute with the violin doubling it with mordent patterns (See fig. 2.41a). As a continuation of the initial melody, the general thoughtful atmosphere and the *portamenti* and bowing treatment remain the same as those in the last two extracts. Thus the performer should use the same finger to apply on slides as well as using separate bows for every half beat mordent pattern notes as shown in Fig. 2.41b.

Fig. 2.41a: Seventh movement, ms. 61-64 (Larry Sitsky's notation).





Fig. 2.41b: Seventh movement, ms. 61-64 (Ka Wong's version).



However, the slide in the second beat of bar 63 should be a full scale *portamento*. At this moment, the violin and flute are doubling the same melody, so in a large leap a full scale *portamento* in the violin part can add to the climax of this bar before the violin takes over the melody. Care has to be taken when performing the string crossings in bar 64; when playing the double-*acciaccature*, the performer should first play the  $d\flat$  quickly and softly once its previous  $c$  is sounded.

After a brassy interlude, the violin takes a tranquil section and then comes to a rhapsodic section towards the end of the movement. In Fig. 2.42a, the music becomes more brilliant, and secular in style. There are a number of fast-descending demisemiquavers appearing in the unusual  $1/8+4/4$  time.

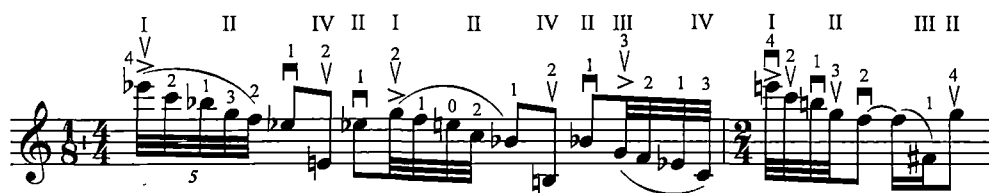
Fig. 2.42a: Seventh movement, ms. 135-136 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



The pattern of descending demisemiquavers followed by quavers are typical in *zheng* music. In playing *zheng*, a plucked-string instrument in China, the strings are plucked by four plectra attached to the player's right hand. A violinist should group the

demisemiquavers in one single bow-stroke (Fig. 2.42b) when playing this type of fast-descending pattern. To apply this effectively in the music, the first notes of the pattern groups should be slightly stressed.

Fig. 2.42b: Seventh movement, ms. 135-136 (Ka Wong's version).



The violin further displays a number of *portamenti* as the music return to a tranquil atmosphere towards the end of the movement. Fig. 2.43a shows there are four *portamenti* incorporated in bars 138-139.

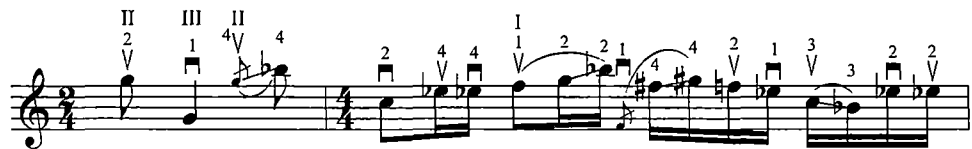
Fig. 2.43a: Seventh movement, ms. 138-139 (Larry Sitsky's notation).



The use of the finger in the first *portamento* of bar 138 is quite unique. As discussed in the earlier section, *portamento* is better performed using either the second or third finger. However, since the *acciaccatura* and its preceding notes form the interval of an octave, the usual octave fingering (1-4) is being used. Thus the slide will then be carried out using just the fourth finger of the performer's left hand. (See fig. 2.43b). Another three *portamenti* appears in the second, third and fourth beats of bar 139, the treatment for the slides in the second and fourth beats are similar to those in the preceding examples. However, the *portamento* of the third beat is better placed

between  $f^{\sharp}$ " and  $g^{\sharp}$ " instead of between the lower  $f'$  *acciaccatura* and  $f^{\sharp}$ " to imitate the tone sliding pattern of the second beat of bar 139 and to make the music more stylistically consistent.

Fig. 2.43b: Seventh movement, ms. 138-139 (Ka Wong's version).



### 2.3.8 Eight movement – EARTH: *Accompanied Cadenza*

The final movement of *I Ching* Violin Concerto is given the title Earth: *Accompanied Cadenza*. The word “cadenza” literally means a flourish inserted into the final cadence of any section of a vocal aria or a solo instrumental movement.<sup>126</sup> In a traditional concerto, a cadenza usually occurs at the end of the first movement where the soloist was expected not only to display virtuosity, but also to improvise and make quotations to thematic material of the movement. The usage of cadenza has undergone tremendous change in the past centuries and the older practice of improvisation has almost entirely disappeared. In modern concerti, cadenzas appear in all parts of the work and serve not only to display virtuosity but also to function as transitional passages. Such example can be seen in Dmitri Shostakovich’s First Cello Concerto. The entire third movement of this cello concerto is written for soloist. This huge cadenza stands as an entire movement in itself and acts as a transition between the second and fourth movements.<sup>127</sup>

Structurally, the eighth movement of *I Ching* violin concerto is in some way similar to the cadenza movement of Shostakovich’s First Cello Concerto. Both movements feature the solo instrument. However, Sitsky has supplied orchestral accompaniments to the virtuosic closing movement of his concerto, and the only “true” solo cadenza appears only from bars 91 to 93. ✓

The movement’s title “Earth” is taken from the last element of *I Ching*. In the theory

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<sup>126</sup> Michael Kennedy, *Oxford Concise Dictionary of Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 116.

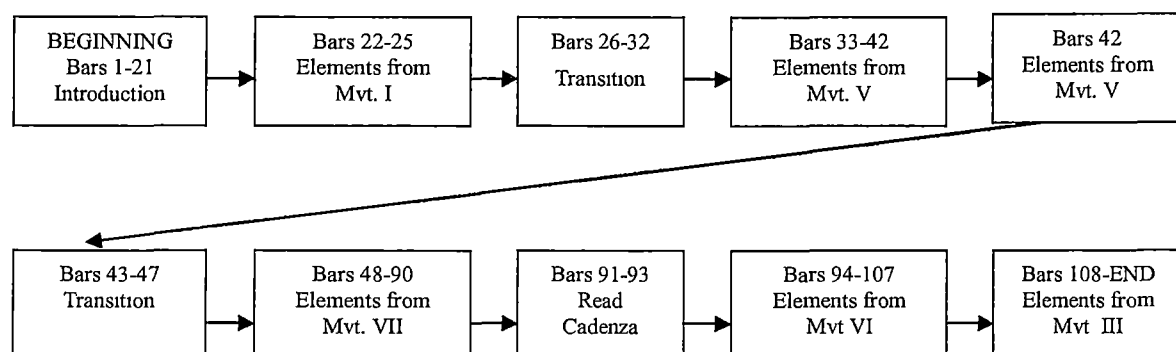
<sup>127</sup> Shao Yiqiang, *Xiandai Yuepai Yuequ Shangxi* [Modern Music Appreciation] (Shijiazhuang: Hebei Education Press, 2004), 457.

of *I Ching*, “Earth” is an opposite element to “Heaven”. It represents the states of yieldingness, receptiveness, responsiveness and devotion.<sup>128</sup> Among the eight elements of *I Ching*, “Earth” is considered as the most sophisticated and complex element. The idea of complexity and tenderness is clearly shown in this movement as Sitsky has intentionally arranged excerpts of the previous sections to reappear again in this final movement and give an atmosphere of tenderness.

The eight trigrams and their special meaning or character influenced the musical atmosphere of each movement, obviously.<sup>129</sup>

As explained by Sitsky, every movement’s character coincides with the meaning of its corresponding title taken from *I Ching*. Since the eighth movement is combined with different musical sections from previous movements, the performer should be aware of the frequent changes in mood and speed. The breakdown chart below (See fig. 2.44) shows the structural layout of this movement.

Fig. 2.44: Structural layout of Eighth movement



<sup>128</sup> R. L. Wing, *The Illustrated I Ching* (New York: Mainstreet Book, 1982), 15.

<sup>129</sup> Ka Wong, *Personal Interview with Larry Sitsky* (conducted: October 18, 2006).

The softness and sympathetic character of “Earth” is shown at the beginning of this movement with the indication of *Andante, Mesto con rubato*. The lower strings initially set the gloomy atmosphere. The solo violin then enters with a melancholic melody and establishes a musical dialogue with the cellos. A change of mood to *Slowly, very freely, espressivo* occurs in bars 22 to 25 where the next four bars is a direct quotation from the initial movement. The performer should play these bars (See fig. 2.45a and b) using the fingering, bowing and dynamics that were used in the first movement.

Fig. 2.45a: Eighth movement, ms. 22-23 (Larry Sitsky’s version).

Slowly, very freely, espr.



Fig. 2.45b: Eighth movement, ms. 22-23 (Ka Wong’s version).

Slowly, very freely, espr.



A transitional section featuring the solo violin appears in bars 26-32 before the oboe quotes elements from the second movement; here the speed indication is switched to *Allegretto*. The tied g''' notes of bar 40 lead the music back to the fifth movement that features double-acciaccature. The bowing and dynamic treatment of these ornaments should be the same as those performed in the fifth movement.

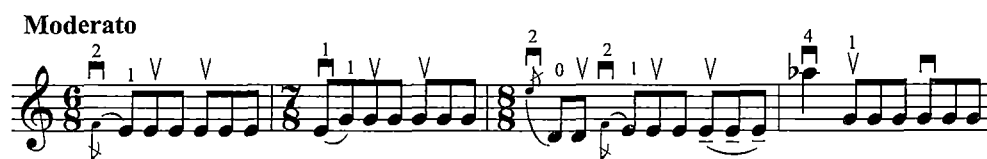
The orchestra then takes up the music of the seventh movement. However, Sitsky puts

the speed indication as *Con moto* but notes that the speed should be faster than those in movement seven. The real cadenza (bars 41-43) then appears with the performer playing irregular semiquaver groups and double-stopped notes with increasing speed (*accelerando*). The speed changes again from bar 94 where a whole 14-bars of music are duplicated from the sixth movement. Fig. 2.46a and b show the technical treatment of the first bars of this melody.

Fig. 2.46a: Eighth movement, ms. 94-97 (Larry Sitsky's version).



Fig. 2.46b: Eighth movement, ms. 94-97 (Ka Wong's version).



The movement finally moves to the last section, displaying an extremely tranquil atmosphere. Instead of copying directly from the third movement, Sitsky tries to create something new, by adopting the melody line in the flute part and allowing the violin to be an accompanist rather than soloist. In this section, the performer should be careful with the intonation.

The *I Ching* is definitely a cross-cultural work that contains Chinese and Western musical elements. The composer himself has the desire of combining Western and Chinese music and has seemingly written a cross-cultural composition unconsciously.

In general I use Western instruments and rely on my memory of Chinese music to filter through my brain to create hopefully something new.<sup>130</sup>

Multiculturalism only ever truly works when it is relatively unselfconscious; artificial cross-culturalism, although very trendy is often truly awful musically and done by composers for political not musical reasons.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>130</sup> Ka Wong, *Personal Interview with Larry Sitsky* (conducted: October 18, 2006).

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.



## 2.4 Cultural influences on *I Ching* violin concerto

Before discussing the cultural influences found in the *I Ching* Violin Concerto, we should examine the category of World Music or Western Art Music into which this concerto falls. The use of Chinese melodies and rhythms demonstrates that the Concerto contains exotic elements. Here the word “exotic” refers to “Chinese” elements as seen through the eyes of a Westerner. Moreover, the Concerto contains appropriation of non-Western musical style, such as the vast amount of “non-Western” style *portamenti* found in the violin part. Finally, the Concerto is a combination of multiple traditions that the composer has described as a ‘mixed salad’ in his interview. The *I Ching* Violin Concerto is piece of world music that falls on the non-mainstream music group.

## 2.4.1 Cultural factors influences the creation of

### *I Ching* violin concerto

Larry Sitsky is an Australian composer with extremely diverse cultural background. He was born to Russian Jewish parents who fled to Tianjin, where Sitsky was born. Sitsky spent his first sixteen years in Tianjin. Childhood is an important period for the development of one's character and values, but even more so in the case of Sitsky with the formidable influences of Russian, Chinese and Jewish heritage. The exposure of different cultures allowed Sitsky to gain knowledge that enabled him to create multi-cultural and cross-cultural musical compositions. In addition to his *I Ching* Violin Concerto, many other of Sitsky's compositions contain diverse cultural elements.

#### **Structure**

Unlike the traditional three movements or one continuous movement format, the *I Ching* Violin Concerto represents the eight basic elements of the *I Ching* philosophy with eight individual movements. These headings are taken from the names of the eight elements of the hexagrams to represent a particular "states" – Water, Wind, Mountain, Thunder, Mist, Heaven, Fire and Earth. These titles are followed by a descriptive word such as *Recitative*, *Aria*, *Perpetual Motion* and so forth. The combined name of the Chinese element with musically descriptive words is an initial example of cultural appropriation and cultural fusion of this Concerto.

In the nineteenth century, works for violin and orchestra were usually written in three-movement form and we only rarely find violin concertos similar to Édouard Lalo's *Symphonie espagnole* for violin and orchestra which consists of five movements.<sup>132</sup> With the development of modern music, the formal structure of the violin concerto is less predictable. Composers in the twentieth century were not “bound” to structure their music in such framework. Larry Sitsky is one of such examples, his *I Ching* violin concerto contains eight movements and the whole of movement three and the second half of movement five is notated without bar lines or time signatures.<sup>133</sup> This makes it look like other Western contemporary music. When this format combines with the violin imitation of *erhu* sound, a music of cultural-mix is made.

### **Instrumentation**

Although its structure is non-western in nature, the *I Ching* concerto uses “Western” orchestral instrumentation. The musical instruments used in this concerto include two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, percussion and lower strings (cellos and double basses). However, the solo violin, a commonly used Western musical instrument, plays not only the western melodies in this concerto, but imitates other Chinese musical sounds – again an opportunity to fuse Chinese and Western music.

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<sup>132</sup> Michael Steinberg, *The Concerto – A Listener's Guide* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 220.

<sup>133</sup> Larry Sitsky, *I Ching* Violin Concerto (Canberra: Manuscript, 1987).

## **Melody and Performing style**

The imitation of both *erhu* and *jinghu* pentatonic melodies can be heard in a number of movements; while three types of instruments (timpani, bass drum, and snare drum) are used in the second movement to imitate the original sounds produced by castanets, drums, and cymbals commonly heard in Beijing operas.

An adaptation to the famous Chinese folk tune *Mo Li Hua* (“Jasmine Flower”), *qin* melody as well as the musical line of a typical monk’s prayer can be found in the fourth to sixth movements. The presentation of these exotic musical ideas on violin is created by employing *portamenti* to imitate folk tune effects. Sitsky did include a lot of Chinese musical elements in the melody, however, the melodies used were not directly quoted from the source but were infused with the composer’s own small melodic changes. These basic compositional techniques Sitsky used in writing such melodies were learnt in Australia and the United States after he left China.

The longest section in the concerto, movement seven, contains some remarkable Chinese temple music. According to Professor Tan Longjian of the Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing, the seventh movement of Sitsky’s *I Ching* violin concerto contained the melody of an ancient Taoist temple hymn. The imitation of such a hymn<sup>134</sup> using the violin as a medium is both original and attractive. Again, Sitsky has employed his “unique” musical style to create a music of cultural fusion.

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<sup>134</sup> Ka Wong, *Personal Interview with Professor Tan Longjian* (conducted: April 2007).

#### **2.4.2 Conclusion on cultural context of *I Ching* violin concerto**

After examining the structure, instrumentation, melody and performing style of Sitsky's *I Ching* violin concerto, I found that the concerto falls more into the category of Western music. I rate the overall Eastern and Western influence in the composition as roughly 1/3 being of Eastern influence or style while approximately 2/3 is Western in nature. It is true that an extraordinary use of texture and structure so imitative of *erhu* and *jinghu* music can be found in the concerto. The "appropriated" antique melodies, used in the concerto, are only heard after the composer's "filtering" and "fusing" processes thus adding a significant Western influence upon the melody.

## 2.5 *I Ching* violin concerto – A conclusion

Sitsky's *I Ching* Violin Concerto is one of the most significant examples of cross-cultural violin music written in the second half of the twentieth century. The personal background of the composer and his encountering of different cultures inspired him to create this work for violin and orchestra.

There are many Chinese musical elements used in the work and its structure does not follow the traditional three-movement concerto, but simply uses eight separate short movements to indicate the eight hexagrams in the theory of *I Ching*. In order to perform the music in an accurate way, it is suggested that the performer first gain some knowledge in the theory of *I Ching*. An understanding in this theory would help the performer bring out proper effects when performing this work. The performer should try to follow the definitions of trigrams mentioned in the previous sections of this chapter and then try to imagine the mood and atmosphere associated with these elements. In the first movement WATER: *Recitative*, for instance, the performer should first realize that the element of “Water” means “mysterious” and “profound.” S/he can then further analyze the score in detail.

However, the performer does not need in depth knowledge of *I Ching*. This is because most of the available books discuss only a small portion of the basic eight elements of *I Ching*, while leaving a great deal of effort to focus on the combination of trigrams as well as the meanings and predictions of the sixty-four hexagrams, which are not related information to our study of the *I Ching* Violin Concerto.

The eight distinctive movements of the concerto represent different emotional states and

therefore are presented in various moods, tempi and structures. The performer need a good imaginative grasp of both the various movements and the concerto as a whole. S/he needs to have a clear mind before performing a particular movement and to make sure that the correct tempi and moods are being used in specific movements. The final movement of this Concerto is more complicated than the other seven movements. There are consistent changes in mood and tempo, thus the performer should have a good understanding of the structural layout of this movement (Fig. 2.44) as discussed in the previous section.

Regarding to the technical effects of the work, there are lots of *portamenti* being used in this composition to reminiscence the sound of *erhu*. Other imitative sounds of Chinese musical instruments include those of the *Zheng* and *Xiao*. To make violin sounds akin to those created by Chinese instruments, the performer should try to listen to a number of *Erhu*, *Guzhen*, *Zheng* and *Xiao* music before imitating these sounds.

*Portamento* is a frequently discussed technical method borrowed from the performance of *erhu* or *jinghu* music. To employ such a technique correctly, the performer should relax his/her left hand and shift the finger from one position to another. This movement is accompanied by an increase in his/her left hand finger pressure with increasing bow speed as well as bow pressure. A *crescendo* can then be made from the *acciacatura* to the main note. The performer should also remember that even though the work contains some Chinese musical elements, it is not completely Chinese because the composer only wants to demonstrate a kind of filtering effect in order to present this concerto in a mixed Chinese and Western musical style a style that the composer refer to as his “own.”<sup>135</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> Ka Wong, *Personal Interview with Larry Sitsky* (conducted: October 18, 2006).

## CHAPTER 3 TAN DUN: *OUT OF PEKING OPERA*

### VIOLIN CONCERTO

#### 3.1 Tan Dun – the composer

Born in 1957 in Simao, China, Tan Dun is one of the most influential classical composers to emerge from China. He combines the musical traditions of his homeland with contemporary Western influences and has composed a rich catalogue of unique works. Tan Dun is an important icon on the world's music scene with a creative repertoire that spans the boundaries of classical, multimedia, Eastern and Western musical systems.<sup>136</sup>

In the Cultural Revolution, Tan Dun was forced to plant rice in the countryside and later worked as a violin player and arranger for a provincial Beijing Opera troupe.<sup>137</sup> In 1978, based on his remarkable knowledge of traditional Chinese folk melodies, Tan Dun was admitted to the famous Central Conservatory of Music in Beijing where he studied with Li Yinghai and Zhao Xingdao.<sup>138</sup> During his eight years at the conservatory, Tan Dun became interested in learning from new, outside musical influences and using composition as a means of exploring and challenging musical boundaries. The works of Shostakovich influenced Tan Dun during this period.<sup>139</sup>

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<sup>136</sup> Tan Dun – the composer. *G Schirmer Inc.* [home page on-line]; available from [http://www.schirmer.com/default.aspx?TabId=2419&State\\_2872=2&ComposerId\\_2872=1561](http://www.schirmer.com/default.aspx?TabId=2419&State_2872=2&ComposerId_2872=1561); Internet; accessed 27 May 2007.

<sup>137</sup> Musicians in their own words – Tan Dun, *NPR News* [home page on-line]; available from <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=5148259>; accessed 26 May 2007.

<sup>138</sup> Tan Dun's Background and Development. *G Schirmer Inc.* [home page on-line]; available from [http://209.218.170.3/composers/tan\\_essay.html](http://209.218.170.3/composers/tan_essay.html); Internet; accessed 26 May 2007.

<sup>139</sup> Zhuang Yao, *Tansuo yu Kuangre* [Exploration and Fascination] (Shanghai: Dongfong Publishing, 2000), 311.



In 1983, Tan Dun was awarded a Weber prize in Dresden for his String Quartet: *Feng Ya Song*. This distinctive quartet did not just echo Bartók and Western serialism, but also reflected a stronger interest in traditional Chinese music. This was one of his early successful cross-cultural compositions. He was the first Chinese composer to win an international composition prize since the establishment of the People's Republic of China. The award of this prize forced the government to acknowledge the tremendous new artistic forces building in China, and opened the door for a whole generation of young composers.<sup>140</sup>

In 1986, Tan received a fellowship to attend Columbia University where he completed a doctoral program in music composition, studying with renowned composers Chou Wen-Chung, George Edwards and Mario Davidovsky.<sup>141</sup> He remained a resident of the New York city after receiving a doctorate in musical composition.

Among the many international honours he has received, Tan Dun was elected by Toru Takemitsu for the Glenn Gould Prize in Music Communication, and by Hans Werner Henze for the Munich International Music Theatre Award. He was also a winner of the Grawemeyer Award for classical composition, Grammy Award, Academy Award, and Musical America's "Composer of The Year" in 2003.<sup>142</sup>

Known for his use of vivid drama, expressive harmonies and imaginative tonal colouring, Tan Dun has been characterized by his spatial arrangements and use of

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<sup>140</sup> Tan Dun biography in depth, *Tan Dun Online* [home page on-line]; available from <http://www.tandunonline.com/biography/?id=2>; Internet; accessed 27 May 2007.

<sup>141</sup> Tan Dun – the composer. *G. Schirmer Inc.* [home page on-line]; available from [http://www.schirmer.com/default.aspx?TabId=2419&State\\_2872=2&ComposerId\\_2872=1561](http://www.schirmer.com/default.aspx?TabId=2419&State_2872=2&ComposerId_2872=1561); Internet; accessed 27 May 2007.

<sup>142</sup> Tan Dun biography in depth, *Tan Dun Online* [home page on-line]; available from <http://www.tandunonline.com/biography/?id=2>; Internet; accessed 27 May 2007.

silence. He has made an indelible mark on the world's music scene with his creative repertoire, his primary interest lies in creating new works and programmes that can reach new and diverse audience and those that break the boundaries between the classical and non-classical, East and West, avant-garde and indigenous art forms.<sup>143</sup>

Some of Tan Dun's composition include: *Ghost Opera*, *Symphony 1997 (Heaven Earth Mankind)*; *The Map: Concerto for Cello, Video and Orchestra*; *Paper Concerto for Paper Percussion and Orchestra*; *Crouching Tiger Concerto* and *Out of Peking Opera*, among others. Tan Dun records for Sony Classical and Deutsche Grammophon and his music is published by G. Schirmer, Inc.

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<sup>143</sup> About Tan Dun. *Sony Masterworks*. [home page on-line]; available from <http://www.sonybmgmasterworks.com/artists/tandun/>; Internet; accessed 26 May 2007.

### 3.2 *Out of Peking Opera* violin concerto – background information

Written in the same year as Larry Sitsky's *I Ching* violin concerto in 1987, Tan Dun's *Out of Peking Opera* is a single movement set as an extended dramatic scene for violin and symphony orchestra. This work is one of the most distinctive violin concertos written by a Chinese composer in recent decades.<sup>144</sup> The premiere of the Concerto took place on 7 February 1988 at the Avery Fisher Hall in New York City, with violinist Vera Weiling Tsu playing violin with the New York City Symphony and conducted by David Eaton.

Tan Dun worked in a Peking Opera troupe as a musician before taking his formal compositional study, these many of his works are influenced by his familiarity with the operas. For example, his *Out of Peking Opera* Violin Concerto and the opera *The Gate*, embrace musical and theatrical elements from this experience of opera. *Out of Peking Opera* Violin Concerto was composed when Tan Dun first arrived in New York.

After seven years of its completion in 1994, the work was revised and was premiered in the same year by Taiwanese violinist Jimmy Cho-Liang Lin in Glasgow, Scotland, with the composer conducting the BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra. This new version calls for an orchestra with 1 piccolo, 2 flutes, 2 oboes, 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 4 horns, 3 trumpets, 3 trombones, a tuba, four percussion, a harp, strings plus solo violin (See fig. 3.1). The work is very percussive in nature. The percussion instruments used include: Woodblock, timpani, Chinese gong of three different sizes (small, medium and large), snare drum, crash cymbals and tam tam.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>144</sup> Qian Renping, *Zhongguo Xiaotiqin Yinyue* [Chinese Violin Music] (Changsha: Hunan Art Publishing, 2001), 214.

<sup>145</sup> Tan Dun, *Out of Peking Opera* Full Score Instrumentation, (G. Schirmer, Inc: 1994), inner cover.

Fig. 3.1: Tan Dun's *Out of Peking Opera* violin concerto manuscript<sup>146</sup>



To enhance the presentation of *Out of Peking Opera*, it is suggested the performer knows some essential and basic facts of China's national opera, the "Peking Opera." This form of performing art originated from the patronage of the royal court<sup>147</sup> and took its name from the city of Peking (now Beijing). This comprehensive art form combines singing, recitation, acting and acrobatics to represent concentrated characteristics of traditional Chinese music and culture.<sup>148</sup> The arias, rhymed dialogues, melodic statements and structure of Peking operas all have their unique and consistent systems, developed from more than two hundred years of practice.

From the dramatic point of view, Peking opera is symbolic. The stage is almost completely bare and simple, usually with no more than a table and two chairs (See fig. 3.2).<sup>149</sup> Scenery and props are not the focal point for audiences; instead the genre focuses on singers who use the symbolic techniques to present the story. The many details of the story are then created in the imagination of the audience.<sup>150</sup> The roles of the actor and actresses are classified according to sex, personality, age, profession and social status with their distinctive types of face painting (See fig. 3.3). The four general types of roles are:

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<sup>146</sup> Tan Dun Photo Gallery, *Tan Dun Online* [home page on-line]; available from <http://www.tandunonline.com/photos>; Internet; accessed 10 Nov 2006.

<sup>147</sup> Yayoi Uno Everett, Frederick Lau, *Locating East Asia in Western Art Music* (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2004), 122.

<sup>148</sup> Yi Bian, *Peking Opera: The Cream of Chinese Culture*, (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2004), 8.

<sup>149</sup> Colin Mackerras, *Peking Opera* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 39.

<sup>150</sup> Shen Sin-Yan, *China: A Journey into its Musical Art*, (Chicago: China Music Society of North America, 2000), 79.

the *sheng* (male role), *dan* (female role), *jing* (painted face) and *chou* (clown).<sup>151</sup>

Fig. 3.2: A traditional stage setting of a table and two chairs. <sup>152</sup>



Fig. 3.3: Some Peking Opera face painting. <sup>153</sup>



The basic melodies sung by these roles are *erhuang* and *xipi*. Among them, the music of *erhuang* is lower and slower as well as more elegant and tranquil, thus more suitable to serious circumstances. The music of *Xipi*, on the other hand, is quicker and higher, more energetic and cheerful that is suited to light-hearted occasions.<sup>154</sup> Vocal music in Peking opera includes arias, recitatives, and heightened speech. Heightened speech is used entirely by significant characters and characters of high social status, while everyday speech is used by the comics and the characters of lower social status.

<sup>151</sup> Yi Bian, *Peking Opera: The Cream of Chinese Culture*, (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2004), 10

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> VCD booklet, *Four Great Bearded Men and Four Great Dan Actors*, (Guangdong: Heilongjing Cultrual Video Publishing, 2003), 3

<sup>154</sup> Colin Mackerras, *Peking Opera* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 53

The orchestra of traditional Peking opera is quite small. The musical instruments are divided into three different categories: Winds (See fig. 3.4), strings (See fig. 3.5) and percussion (See fig. 3.6). The percussion instruments help to indicate different kinds of dramatic situations, atmosphere or moods of the plot, their rhythmic patterns are also important and serve as an indicator to the entrances and exits of dramatic personages. One of the most important percussion instruments is a small drum called *danpi*, whose player functions as the orchestra leader by setting the rhythm for the other musicians.<sup>155</sup> The *suona* of the wind family is sometimes used to play solos to enhance the atmosphere of grand occasions such as launching of attacks, feasts and celebrations. In Peking opera, the *jinghu*, literally means “Beijing fiddle”, is the principal instrument for vocal accompaniment. It has a snake skin covered resonator, and is played with a horse-haired bow that is attached in between two strings. This type of instrument is medium in size that produces high pitched tones and uses the largest number of ornaments in performance.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Shen Sin-Yan, *China: A Journey into its Musical Art*, (Chicago: China Music Society of North America, 2000), 77.

Fig. 3.4: Peking Opera Wind instruments: *Dizi*, *Sheng* and *Suona* (from left to right).<sup>157</sup>



Fig. 3.5: Peking Opera String instruments: *Sanxian*, *Pipa*, *Erhu* and *Jinghu* (from left to right).<sup>158</sup>



Fig. 3.6: Peking Opera Percussion instruments: *Danpi*, *Tanggu*, *Gong* and *Cymbals* (from left to right).<sup>159</sup>



<sup>157</sup> Chinese Musical Instruments, *Come Music*, [home page on-line]; available from [http://comemusic.com/book.instrument.php?select=book\\_instrument\\_main](http://comemusic.com/book.instrument.php?select=book_instrument_main); Internet; accessed 10 Nov 2006

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

As mentioned by Tan Dun, his *Out of Peking Opera* is not a duplication of the traditional Peking opera:

The first three bars of this piece [*Out of Peking Opera*] are a direct quotation from the *jinghu* fiddling of Peking Opera. This is the seed – it unfolds, becomes increasingly abstract, expressionistic, developing power, beauty, and longing.<sup>160</sup>

Tan Dun's past experience with the *Peking Opera* has definitely inspired his creation of this violin concerto. The solo violin resembles a Peking opera actress aria and rhymed dialogue, as well as the Peking Opera's fiddle (or *Jinghu*) accompaniment. At the same time, the orchestra evokes the Peking Opera's sonority and atmosphere. The Concerto uses a lot of *portamento*, a technical indication commonly used in Peking opera performances, both in operatic singing, and in the strings' accompaniment of the singers. The application of *portamento* is used to enrich the "Chinese Flavor" of the music. Tan Dun did not simply present "pure" Peking opera music, he has also synthesized a multi-cultural musical language in this work with his inimitable compositional ideas.

Unlike the traditional three-movement concerto format,<sup>161</sup> *Out of Peking Opera* is presented in an extended, single movement that contains the following sections: introduction, a rapid movement, a solo cadenza for the violin (that imitates the aria of *dan*), a lyrical section, and a dramatic conclusion. Its orchestration is colourful with an excellent musical balance between the orchestra, the Chinese percussion instruments and the violin.

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<sup>160</sup> Tan Dun, "Composer Tan Dun" *G Schirmer Inc.* [home page on-line]; available from [http://www.schirmer.com/default.aspx?TabId=2420&State\\_2874=2&workId\\_2874=33572](http://www.schirmer.com/default.aspx?TabId=2420&State_2874=2&workId_2874=33572); Internet; accessed 7 Nov 2006.

<sup>161</sup> Chris Woodstra, Gerald Brennan and Allen Scbrott, *All Music Guide to Classical Music* (San Francisco: Backbeat Books, 2005), 1554-1555.



The 18-minute Concerto commences with the violin imitating the sound of *jinghu*. The energetic melody is derived from the music of *xipi* that creates a cheerful atmosphere. This Chinese theme undergoes a variety of transformations to Western styles, and at the end, as the music reaches a powerful climax and draws to a conclusion that resembles the music of *erhuang*. The string section of the orchestra closes off the work by implementing the distinctive, sliding tone of one-string Chinese fiddling technique on the solo violin.

### **3.3      *Out of Peking Opera* violin concerto – technical approaches to performance**

As mentioned in the previous section, Tan Dun's *Out of Peking Opera* is a single movement violin concerto that contains various sections corresponding to an introduction, a fast movement, a solo *cadenza* for the violin, a lyrical section and a dramatic conclusion. Technical notes on the music will be listed below according to the alphabetic order marked by the composer on the manuscript.

### 3.3.1 Introduction

The work commences with a three-bar “genuine” Peking opera melody that is played *fortissimo* by the solo violin. (See fig. 3.7a)

Fig. 3.7a: ms. 1-3 (Tan Dun’s notation).

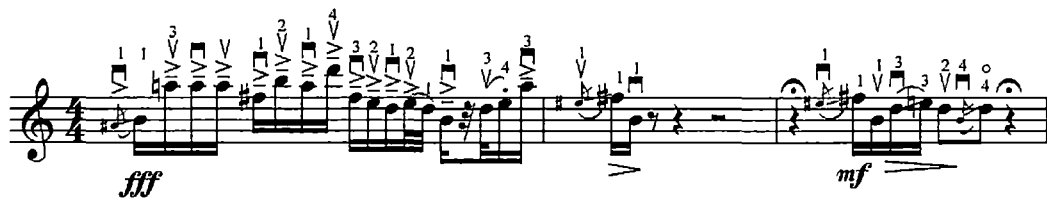


There are many “schools” of Peking opera art, the arias and accompaniment of each school present their distinctive characteristics. The classification of the various schools of Peking opera is closely related to the fame of their various founders. For example, the Mei School, was established by the celebrated actor Mei Lanfang and the Xun School was established by the notable actor Xun Huisheng.<sup>162</sup> The Peking opera melody employed here by Tan Dun is shrill, energetic and lively, and this coincides with the aria melody and accompaniment used in the Xun School’s opera *Hong Niang*.

To perform the initial melody effectively, the performer should listen to operatic excerpts and the *jinghu* accompaniment of Xun’s School’s operas and obtain the general mood and feeling of such melody. A majority of the notes of the first bar need to be stressed as indicated with “accents” by the composer and to make it sound more like a melody of Peking opera, the performer should use the articulation given in Fig. 3.7b.

<sup>162</sup> Yi Bian, *Peking Opera: The Cream of Chinese Culture*, (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2004), 17

Fig. 3.7b: ms. 1-3 (Ka Wong's version).



Similar to Larry Sitsky's *I Ching* Violin Concerto, Tan Dun's *Out of Peking Opera* employs many *acciaccature* as typically found in *jinghu* and *erhu* music. According to Tan Dun's musical intention, the first ornamented note should be played with force and then diminishing to its subsequent main note b' before approaching the following stressed semiquavers. Since the ornament and the main notes are only a semitone apart, the same finger (first finger) can be used to play this slide. The next *acciaccatura* in bar 2 can be played with similar dynamic treatment and fingering.

Except for the initial *acciaccatura*, Fig. 3.7b shows a *tenuto* mark ( - ) added above every accented note in Tan Dun's original. This combined articulation (  $\geq$  ) above the note means that it is to be played with accent and the player should hold for its full value. To play this typical Peking Opera accompaniment melody, the performer should use short and quick bow strokes for each individual note. First, place the mid-point of the bow on the A string and then stress the first *acciaccatura* before going directly into the melody. The level of pressure applied to each accented note has to be the same, creating an "unvarying" *fortissimo* melody that imitates those produced by a *jinghu*.

The crashing sound of a pair of Chinese small gongs is heard right after the violin melody finishes in bar 2. There are another three sliding notes at the end of this

melody in bar 3 and the performer ought to note carefully where the accents fall on these notes. The *acciaccature* are suggested to be played slightly louder than their subsequent notes using the same finger. Since this phrase is indicated with a *diminuendo* towards its end, the use of the fourth finger on the last slide towards an open string will be more suitable.

A series of soft percussion sounds is heard for the following five bars before the violin again enters. In Fig. 3.8a, Tan Dun wrote music that imitates the percussive music of Chinese cymbals. The Chinese cymbals consist of two circular metal plates with hemispherical central sections which allow it to attenuate quickly.<sup>163</sup> In bar 10, the note  $f^{\sharp}$  is repeated and gains velocity through the *crescendo* to the next bar. Each of these main notes is preceded with an *acciaccatura* one tone lower or higher than the principal note with a sliding indication written by the composer.

Fig. 3.8a: ms. 10-11 (Tan Dun's notation).

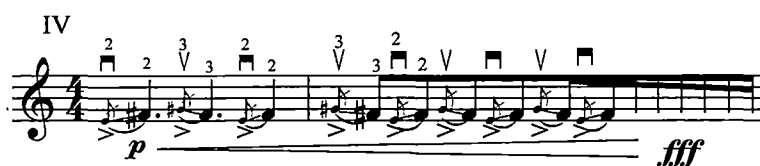


The performer should play this extract using the articulation, bowing and fingering listed in Fig. 3.8b. Each of the *acciaccature* is given an accent indicating that this ornament should be stressed. The subsequent note after the ornament is to be played softer, producing a “fade-out” effect similar to the Chinese cymbal. The upper third of the bow near the tip should be used at the beginning of bar 10. The first ornament should be played with an up-bow with slow bow speed and bow length. An increase in

<sup>163</sup> Shen Sin-Yan, *Chinese Music and Orchestration*, (Chicago: China Music Society of North America, 1991), 85

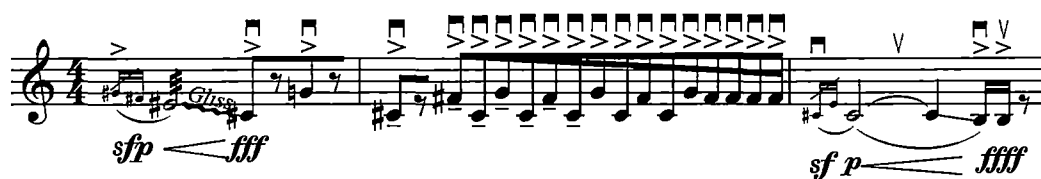
bow speed and bow length is necessary as the music approaches the next bar in which an immense *crescendo* from *piano* to *fortissimo* has to be created with boldness.

Fig. 3.8b: ms. 10-11 (Ka Wong's version).



This bold atmosphere continues in the following three bars (See fig. 3.9a). The immense *crescendo* is pushed towards the *tremolo* e<sup>#</sup> minim that is preceded by a pair of double *acciaccature*. Here Tan Dun combines the *tremolo* with a “short-distant” *glissando* preparing the way to build up tension and volume again with heavy rapid notes in bar 13. The rhythmic pattern of the rapid notes resembles those in bar 11 and each of these heavy accented notes is given a down bow indication by the composer. The music reaches its climax at the end of bar 14 where the last two repeated b’ semiquavers are to be played extremely loudly (*ffff*).

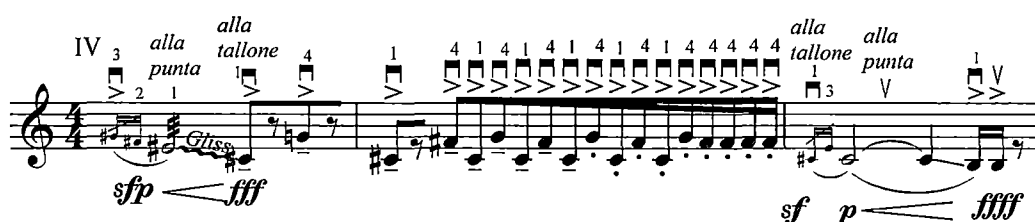
Fig. 3.9a: ms. 12-14 (Tan Dun's notation).



To bring out the bold atmosphere effectively, the performer must understand that the melody in bars 12 -14 is a continuation of bars 10-11. The music here is reminiscent of the typical “trouble” scene in Peking Opera where the actor or actress faces a problem and walks back-and-forth on stage to demonstrate his/her anxiety. The

accompaniment to such a scene is normally played by Chinese cymbals or *Ban*. *Ban* is the Chinese name for wooden clappers. This type of percussion instrument is mainly used to beat out the tempo together with *danpi* drum while the actor sings or to keep time for the other instruments. *Ban* and *danpi* drum are often controlled by a single percussionist.<sup>164</sup> Each of the notes with down bow strokes in Fig. 3.9b is used to imitate the sound of *ban* and the acceleration in bar 13 creates a restless and fretful mood.

Fig. 3.9b: ms. 12-14 (Ka Wong's version).



A pair of double *acciaccature* begins bar 12 of Fig. 3.9b. The performer should play the first accented *acciaccatura* with left hand third finger and apply pressure on it as well as on the bow at the same time. Since there is a double dynamic indication, *sfp*, being placed under the ornaments, the pressure being exerted on the first note should immediately be released when music approaches the second *acciaccatura*. The combination of *tremolo* and *glissando* minim must be performed using the tip of the bow (*alla punta*). This is to allow the right hand to play the *tremolo* in a more “natural” and “comfortable” way, assure and allowing an easier creation of *crescendo* from *piano* to *fortissimo*.

<sup>164</sup> Yi Bian, *Peking Opera: The Cream of Chinese Culture*, (Beijing: Foreign Languages Press, 2004), 124

The heavily accented quavers and accelerating semiquavers are crucial in creating the impression of intensity. To make the notes sound louder, the lower half (*alla tallone*) of the bow above the frog should be used and each bow stroke must be executed very quickly. An ideal method is to practice bow movements slowly and add an up bow after each of the given down bow notes. These up bows have to be kept silent as they take a place off the string during practice, and the speed of them should be as quick as the down bows. The performer should relax his/her right hand and wrist after each heavy down bow stroke to rebound the right hand wrist back to the up bow position. By doing this, the performer can then play the music of this extract more efficiently.

The pair of *acciaccature* of bar 14 has to be played with lower half of the bow because of the preceding quick semiquaver notes. The performer must play the first ornament sharply and then create an immense dynamic change from *piano* to *fortissimo* as the melody approaches from the tied note c' to the b in semiquavers. The increase in dynamic should be done by applying tight vibrato and finger pressure on the strings and at the same time exerting bow pressure on the string.

A succession of soft percussion sounds is presented in the following six bars (bars 15-20) to relieve the tension of the anxious atmosphere. The “slender” texture of the sound has been used once previously, in bars 4-7 right after the initial *jinghu* melody in the beginning of this Violin Concerto. The violin plays a long tied harmonic note, d'' in semibreves before entering with the melody from bars 23-25 (See fig. 3.10a). The violin melody in bar 23 can be regarded as a “question” with its pairing answer in bar 25. There are three *acciaccature* placed before three consecutive quavers of d'' in both bar 23 and 25. This note pattern is typically used in *jinghu* or *erhu* music.



Fig. 3.10a: ms. 23-25 (Tan Dun's notation).



Similar to the treatment in previous extracts, the *acciaccatura* in bars 23 and 25 have to be accented in order to bring out the melodic characteristics of Peking opera. A *decrescendo* is used immediately after each *acciaccatura* stress on the ornamented note. The performer must use short bow strokes with bow pressure when playing these ornaments and the left hand finger should loosen up its finger pressure after playing each accented *acciaccatura* and approaches the principal notes.

As the interval between the ornaments and the principal notes is only a major second apart in bar 23, the fourth finger can be used to play both notes. When sliding the fourth finger from c" to d", the performer should remember to keep the left hand wrist loose and then extend the finger to the next principal note in *decrescendo*. Tan Dun has indicated a slide between the g' crotchet to the upper tied a" in harmonics, however, a direct slide from g' to a" would spoil the “genuine” atmosphere of the melody. Therefore, the performer should start sliding the note from e" to a", making it more like Peking opera music.

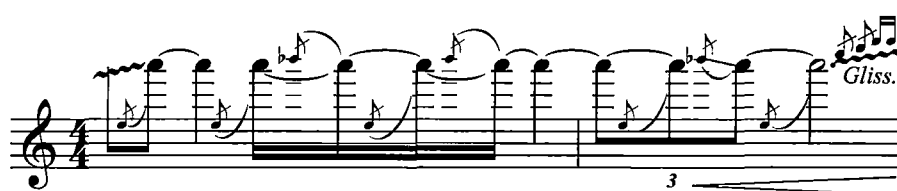
Fig. 3.10b: ms. 23-25 (Ka Wong's version).



### 3.3.2 Section A

The rhythmic pattern of bar 13 reappears in bar 32 before a series of thunderous percussion sounds are heard. The violin then takes up the melody that flourishes with many “decorative” *acciaccature* and plays the melody from low register to high register. In bars 43-44 (See fig. 3.11a), a tied *a*''' is played continuously with frequent *acciaccature* preceding it. The ornaments appear here can be divided into two types. The first one is the recurring *acciaccature* in *e*'' and the other type is the *b*♭''' that is just a semitone higher than the principal note. A series of *acciaccature* is combined with a dotted minim *glissando* in bar 44.

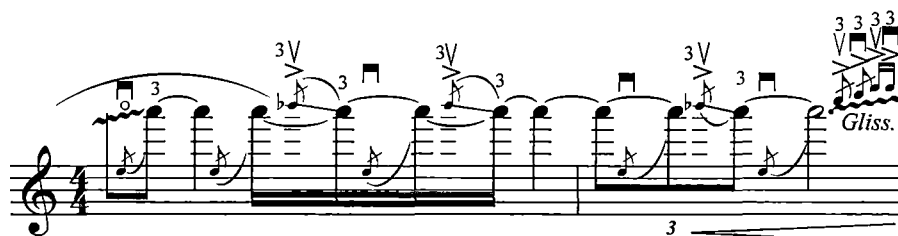
Fig. 3.11a: ms. 43-44 (Tan Dun's notation).



The performer ought not use *vibrato* when performing these two bars because the principal note is in eighth position and at the same time, there are lower *acciaccature* accompanying the repeated notes. The use of *vibrato* can damage the transparency of the principal notes and thus ruin the musical effect intended by the composer. Among the twelve *acciaccature* in Fig. 3.11b, only those ornaments of *e*'' can be played slightly, all the other *acciaccature* have to be performed with accents with *decrescendo* when approaching the principal notes. The last four *acciaccature* in bar 44 are the most difficult ornaments to be achieved. The performer's third finger should be relaxed before sliding upward. The performer should slide the note up from

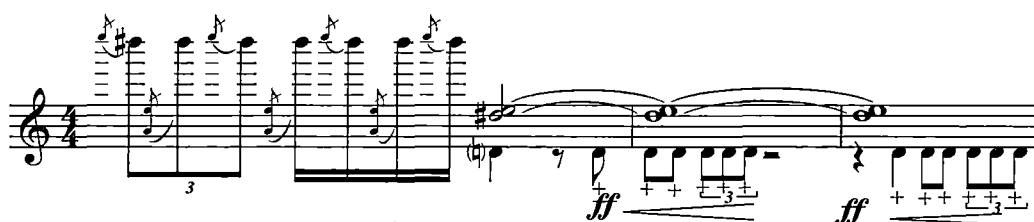
a''' by moving his/her left and wrist and then applying finger pressure on the string where s/he wants to stress the ornamented notes.

Fig. 3.11b: ms. 43-44 (Ka Wong's version).



Towards the last minim of bar 47, Tan Dun combined double-stop *legato* notes with a left hand *pizzicato* effect. The performer should use his/her right hand's index finger to pluck the string(s). The indication of left-hand *pizzicato* is different from the right hand *pizzicato*, it is designated by a “cross” (+) placed under a note. Left-hand *pizzicato* notes are often performed on open strings, and the plucking action is done by the little finger or the “fourth” finger of the performer's left hand.<sup>165</sup> In Fig. 3.12a, a tied triple-stop minim appears on the last two beats of bar 47. The upper two notes of the triple-stop chord are tied to the two semibreves in the following two bars. An inner voice part with repeated d' quavers is marked with “cross” signs. These notes need to be plucked by the little finger of the left hand.

Fig. 3.12a: ms. 47-49 (Tan Dun's notation).

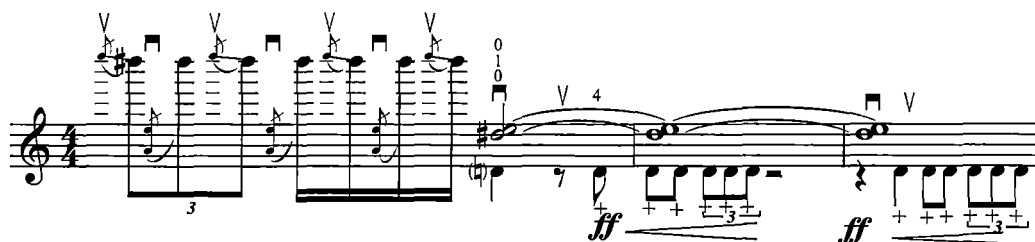


<sup>165</sup> Samuel Adler, *The Study of Orchestration*, (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2002), 35.  
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The combination of double-stop notes and left hand *pizzicato* might seem difficult for most violinists because the performer's left hand fingers need to do two separate jobs. As shown in Fig. 3.12b, the last minim of bar 47 is to be played with the index finger or first finger. The bow first touches the open D string on the third beat of the bar and then immediately changes angle to play both the A and open E strings. The performer then ought to prepare the plucking action of the fourth finger. To do this, the player's left thumb should first stay firmly at the back of the fingerboard with his/her first finger being placed on the third position of A string. The second, third and fourth fingers of the left hand should be relaxed to allow the fourth finger to play the "heavy" *pizzicato* of the lower voice part effectively. The performer should think of doing two different "tasks" at the same time: the technical independence of these two effects is very important.

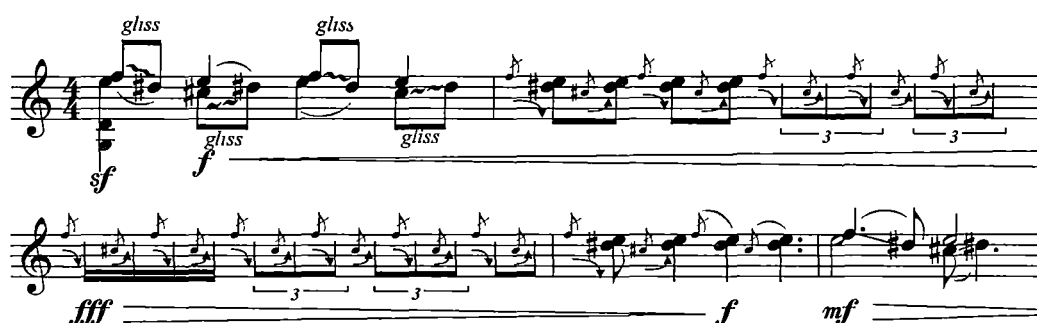
The upper voice part of the above example contains a very "long" tied note that is the equivalent to the note value of ten crotchets thus making it necessary to change bow strokes. However, the change of bow stroke here should be logical and its application should not affect the left-hand *pizzicato*. For example, the bow stroke should be changed when the lower voice part has a rest, instead of changing the bow when the little finger is doing *pizzicato*. In this way, the *pizzicato* notes can be heard very clearly and at the same time, facilitates the right hand to play the *fortissimo* and *crescendo* of bars 48-49 efficiently using increasing bow pressure.

Fig. 3.12b: ms. 47-49 (Ka Wong's version).



Immediately following the left-hand *pizzicato* is a series of double-stop notes with *glissando* (See fig. 3.13a). Like the second half of the previous example, bars 50-54 include a number of double-stop notes. This passage with its corresponding quavers are either marked with *glissando* (marked as *gliss.*) or with slides (indicated by *acciaccature* with curve marks) placed in front of them. The music becomes faster and faster as it approaches bar 51 where the basic notes value develop into quavers, triplet quavers and finally semiquavers.

Fig. 3.13a: ms. 50-54 (Tan Dun's notation).



The anticipatory mood of the first two bars of this extract is very similar to that of bars 10-11 (See fig. 3.8b). The anxious mood of the music is like that typically found in Peking Opera of a narrator of a story of a Peking Opera who keeps walking on stage and wishes to find some solution to an unsolved problem. The level of dynamic is extremely important in this example. A gradual increase in dynamics from *forte* to *fortissimo* (*fff*: triple forte) should be done smoothly as if the performer is crashing Chinese cymbals continuously. A *diminuendo* should be performed gradually as the music approaches bars 52-53. In bars 50-51, the first four double-stop notes on the main beats should be accented. After applying pressure on the accented strong beat notes, the performer should relax his/her finger and slide to the next quaver. The level of relaxation of the finger is exceptionally important because it will affect the sound

quality of the slide and the subsequent notes. An *un poco diminuendo* should be applied to its successive weak beat quavers.

Regarding the shifting movement of the left hand, a full arm shifting movement from one position to another is used. This full arm movement is employed to produce either *glissando* or *slides* from bar 50 to the second beats of bar 51. As the music gets quicker and quicker in bar 51, the performer should realize that a *diminuendo* after the strong beat cannot be achieved because the music is too quick. The shifting movement from one note to another slowly changes from left hand full arm to left wrist in the third beat of bar 51. The full-arm shift then returns just before the music approaches bar 53.

Fig. 3.13b: ms. 50-54 (Ka Wong's version).

The image shows a musical score for two staves, measures 50-54. The top staff begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). It contains several measures with notes and rests. Above the staff, there are markings for 'Full arm shifting' and 'Wrist shifting'. Below the staff, there are markings for 'gliss' (glissando) and 'sf' (sforzando). The bottom staff also contains notes and rests, with markings for 'Wrist shifting' and 'Full arm shifting' above it. Below the staff, there are markings for 'fff' (fortississimo), 'f' (forte), and 'mf' (mezzo-forte). The score includes various musical notations such as triplets, slurs, and dynamic markings.

A series of “dissonant” intervals appears in Fig. 3.14a. To demonstrate the composition as a cross-cultural music, Tan Dun has included not just the music of Peking Opera but has also incorporated passages with contemporary Western musical elements such as successive use of discordant musical intervals and the exploitation of high register double-stops. The range of this example is extremely high with its highest sounding note being  $e^b'''$ . Since the passage is quite fast with both consistent

double-stopped notes, intonation will be an important issue to perform this extract with appropriate musical drama. For this rapid passage of consistent double-stopped note runs from the low register on the high register on the violin, intonation is an important consideration in performing this extract efficiently. Aside from intonation, the correct position of the left hand fingers on the fingerboard as well as bowing are two important aspects to achieve the musical effect designated by the composer.

Fig. 3.14a: ms. 67-70 (Tan Dun's notation).



There are several harmonic diminished octaves in the extract in bars 67 and 68. This restless and jarring music can be uncomfortable for some performers' sensibilities. Therefore, a special way of practicing this extract will be discussed below.

To overcome intonation and speed problems as well as balancing the dynamic of double-stop notes, the performer should carefully note the fingering stated in Fig. 3.14b. The suggested fingering is logically derived to help the performer achieve better musical effect when playing this passage. The left hand should stay in the first position when playing the first two beats of bar 67 before shifting to the fourth position in the third beat. The performer must carefully note the diminished octave harmonic interval at the first and third beats of bar 67. When practicing, the performer can first play these intervals as perfect octaves, that is, from the lower  $e^b$  to  $e$ ". When he/she has gained confidence in playing the octave, then he/she should shift the D down one semitone to its original  $e^b$ " note. In this way, a better intonation can be

achieved, especially when playing in a high position and the performer can be more familiar with the continues changes of notes, fingering and positions.

The accented semiquavers in the second half of bar 67 are achieved by bow pressure and bow speed. The intonation of bar 68 can be hazardous to performers who have problems working out discordant intervals. Again, the concept of perfect octaves notes can be used here. The performer can first play the upper  $e^b$  first beat of bar 68 and shift immediately to its higher octave  $e^b$ . When the performer is familiar with this shifting motion, he/she can then flatten the upper note to get the original effect of the music. The same method can be applied onto the third and fourth notes of bar 68 making the proper music much easier to be achieved.

In the original version, Tan Dun has placed an accent on the  $e^{'''}$  quaver on the last beat of bar 68. Since this note is tied to the next quaver and it is given an accent, a small *vibrato* can be used. Tan Dun has given a “harmonic” sign on top of the the third note of bar 69, however since there is a *diminuendo* at the bottom of the staff, the performer ought to use *vibrato* at the down bow  $e^b$  and then apply “harmonic” while the note is tied from bar 69 to bar 70.

Fig. 3.14b: ms. 67-70 (Ka Wong’s version).





The discordant intervals in the quintuplet that appears in bars 74-76 are very important. Each of the intervals in the quintuplets are given a *tenuto* mark ( - ) even though the general dynamic is triple fortissimo because the speed of the notes is quite fast (See fig. 3.15a). Long distant *portamenti* can be found in bar 75 while there are also double-stop slides at the end of bar 76.

Fig. 3.15a: ms. 74-76 (Tan Dun's notation).



Fig. 3.15b provides some useful fingering and bowing for performers to tackle. Each of notes in the first two beats is given alternative up or down bow stroke. The notes with *tenuto* marks have to be stressed by using bow pressure. The first four intervals of the quintuplet are to be played in the first position of the fingerboard while the hand then has to shift from first position to the eighth position. The quintuplet should be played as loudly as possible.

The last note of bar 74 and the next two notes in bar 75 need to be performed on the D string so as to achieve a clearer and thicker sound as well as to avoid unnecessary cross string motion. The long distance *portamento* and double-stopped *portamento* have to be played very clearly. They are located in between the second position to the eight position of the fingerboard.

A musical score for the song "The Rose Tree". The score is written for a single melodic line in 4/4 time. The key signature has one sharp (F#), indicating the key of D major. The melody begins with a treble clef and a 4/4 time signature. The first measure contains a quarter note D4, followed by a quarter rest. The second measure contains a quarter note E4, followed by a quarter rest. The third measure contains a quarter note F#4, followed by a quarter rest. The fourth measure contains a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest. The fifth measure contains a quarter note A4, followed by a quarter rest. The sixth measure contains a quarter note B4, followed by a quarter rest. The seventh measure contains a quarter note C5, followed by a quarter rest. The eighth measure contains a quarter note B4, followed by a quarter rest. The ninth measure contains a quarter note A4, followed by a quarter rest. The tenth measure contains a quarter note G4, followed by a quarter rest. The eleventh measure contains a quarter note F#4, followed by a quarter rest. The twelfth measure contains a quarter note E4, followed by a quarter rest. The thirteenth measure contains a quarter note D4, followed by a quarter rest. The fourteenth measure contains a quarter note C4, followed by a quarter rest. The fifteenth measure contains a quarter note B3, followed by a quarter rest. The sixteenth measure contains a quarter note A3, followed by a quarter rest. The seventeenth measure contains a quarter note G3, followed by a quarter rest. The eighteenth measure contains a quarter note F#3, followed by a quarter rest. The nineteenth measure contains a quarter note E3, followed by a quarter rest. The twentieth measure contains a quarter note D3, followed by a quarter rest. The score ends with a double bar line. The tempo is marked "Allegretto". The dynamics are marked "ff" (fortissimo) at the beginning and "f" (forte) later in the piece. The score includes various musical notations such as notes, rests, and bar lines.

Fig. 3.16a: ms. 79-80 (Tan Dun's notation).



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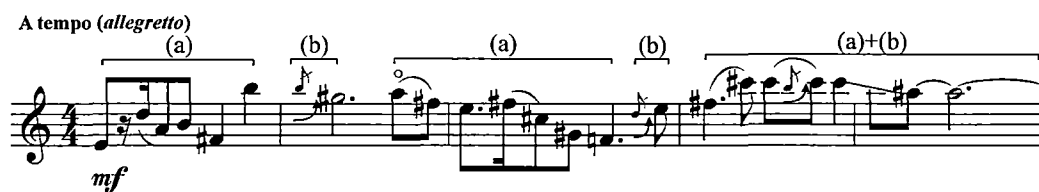
Fig. 3.16b: ms. 79-80 (Ka Wong's version).



### 3.3.3 Section B

The *Allegretto* section is twice as fast as the previous section as indicated by the composer's new metronome marking ( $\text{♩} = 120$ ). The low brass, wind, percussion and strings bring out the theme successively in the preliminary bars (bars 81-94) before the re-entrance of the violin. The solo violin then conveys a new musical idea that displays a "mixture" of Western and Chinese musical elements: the frequent up-and-down leaps and dissonant melodic intervals, identified as bracket "a", are unquestionably contemporary in Western musical style whereas the usage of *portamenti* (identified as bracket "b") adds oriental favour to the melody line. Fig. 3.17 shows how these Western and Chinese musical elements are displayed in the opening bars of the extract. The Western contemporary melody line in bars 98-99 (bracket "a+b") is embedded with typical Chinese *portamenti*.

Fig. 3.17a: ms. 95-99 (Tan Dun's notation).



The use of logical fingering is a key factor in performing the above extract effectively. The performer should start with the fingering order of 1 - 4 - 2 - 3 and stay on the D string for the first three beats of bar 95 (See fig. 3.17b): the semiquaver d" in this bar would normally be played on the A string, however, to create better sound quality, this note should be played as a harmonic on the D string instead. Another benefit gained from using this harmonic fingering is that the player avoids unnecessary string-crossing during these three beats.

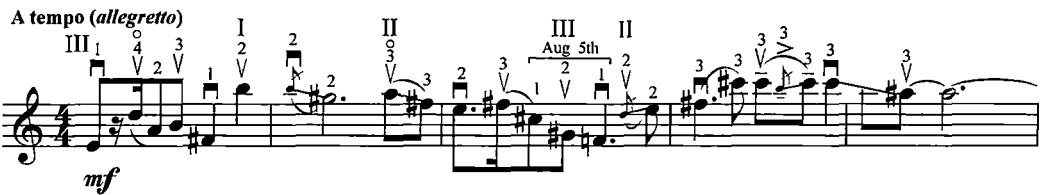
To play the distinctive Chinese *portamento* prior to the dotted minim in bar 96, the

performer should place his/her second finger on the third position on the E string before employing forearm sliding to the dotted minim g". A slight accent must be applied on the *acciaccatura* using both finger pressure and bow speed. After the slide, the second finger of the left hand will arrive at the subsequent dotted minim in the normal first position, the most comfortable and secure place for all violinists. Here the second finger can then apply *vibrato* to this long note creating beautiful sound quality.

According to the composer's indication, the first quaver of the fourth beat in bar 96 has to be played as a "harmonic," thus the bow has to cross back to the A string immediately after the dotted minim is played. To make the music coincide with the latter half of this extract (bars 98-99), a *portamento* should be added between the last two quavers of bar 96. A smooth connection of the dotted minim and the quavers in this bar is vital; the performer should prepare in advance both the right hand string crossing and a big "leap" of the left hand. In most of the previous examples of sliding, the starting note of the slide is usually played with an "accent," but the note here is indicated with an "harmonic" sign by the composer. Thus the performer needs to make sure a clear "harmonic" note is sounded and this *portamento* should be played by a left hand wrist slide instead of a forearm slide.

Since bars 95 and 97 are very similar in their rhythmic pattern and articulation, the performer should use the same bowing in bar 95 and bar 97. The c#" quaver of the second beat of bar 97 should be played with the first finger on the A string. For the string crossing to the D string and for playing the next g#" quaver, the performer ought to be careful with intonation because the interval between the two notes that embraces the g#" quaver is an augmented fifth instead of a perfect fifth.

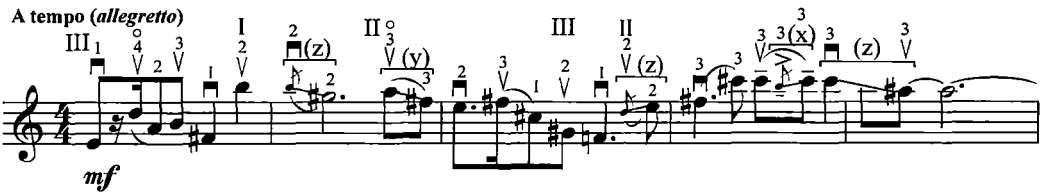
Fig. 3.17b: ms. 95-99 (Ka Wong’s version).



The last quaver of bar 97 should be played on the A string with *portamento* indicated by the composer. The *acciaccatura* and the principal note is only a major second apart, and in order to shift to higher position in bar 98, a slide is necessary and created by a slight shift downward of the forearm. The *acciaccatura* before the last c<sup>♯</sup> quaver of beat three ought to be treated carefully with both correct fingering and dynamic. The performer should play the consecutive three notes, c<sup>♯</sup> quaver - b<sup>♭</sup> *acciaccatura* - c<sup>♯</sup> quaver, with his/her third finger only and avoid moving both forearm and wrist. As there are four repeated c<sup>♯</sup> in the melody at bar 98, the performer must add an “accent” on the b<sup>♭</sup> *acciaccatura* to make the phrase clearer and more logical. The accented *acciaccatura* can be achieved by applying slight bow pressure on the string, using faster bow speed or employing *vibrato*. The performer can choose all three methods at the same time, but the resulting accent should not be exaggerated. The alternative use of finger slides (x) and forearm slides (y) is shown below.

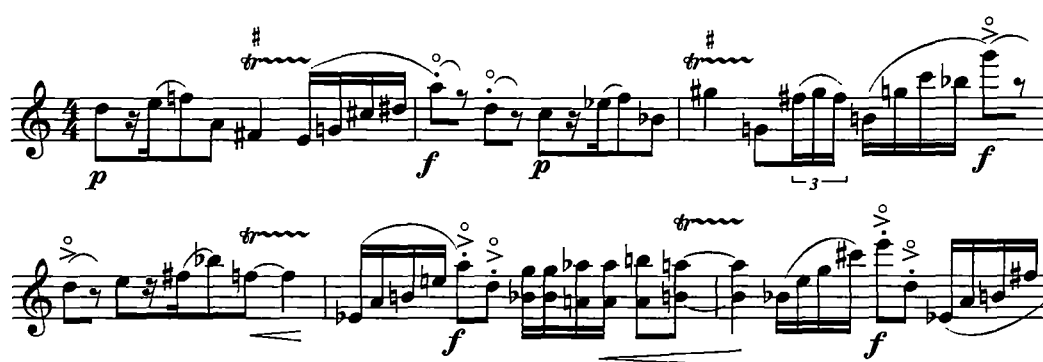
Fig. 3.17c: ms. 95-99

(Ka Wong’s version identifying finger slide “x”, wrist slide “y” and forearm slide “z”).



After the powerful orchestral section the solo violin brings out a new theme that contains a trilled crotchet followed by arpeggiated semiquavers and staccato quavers (bars 112-113). The dynamic alternation from *piano* to *forte* as well as the use of double-stopped semiquavers enhances the excitement and vivacity of the melody of bars 112-117 (See fig. 3.18a), creating an animated mood.

Fig. 3.18a: ms. 112-117 (Tan Dun's notation).



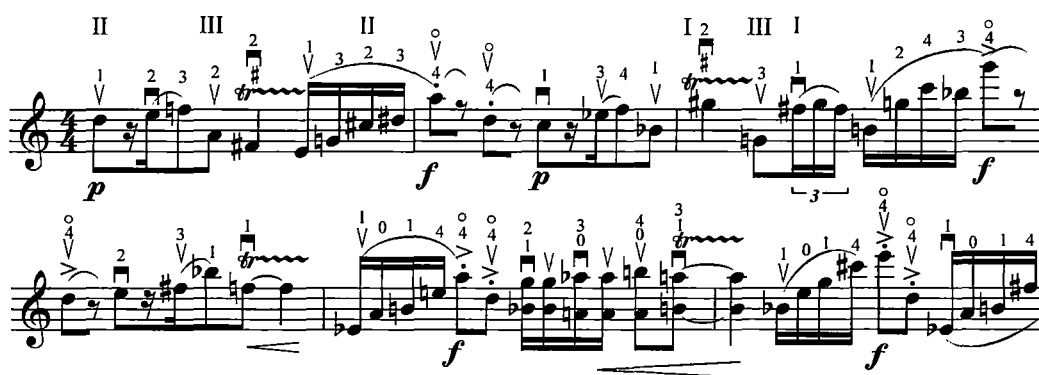
As in the previous example, to create effective fingering, the elimination of unnecessary string-crossing must be observed in performing the above extract. Starting with the first beat of bar 112, the first finger should be placed in the third position on the A string. The player should cross from A to D string, for the  $f\sharp$  quaver of the second beat. The left hand second finger will be on position to play the  $a$  quaver before proceeding to the third beat of bar 112. The performer should then shift his/her second finger down straight away from the third position to the first position on the D string when performing the trilled  $f\sharp$  crotchet.

As shown in Fig. 3.18b below, the first two quavers of bar 113 should be played *forte*. Tan Dun indicated these notes should be performed as harmonics; this is possible if the performer uses more bow when playing these *staccato* quavers. The rhythmic

pattern is then repeated and further developed from the last beat of bar 113 to 117. Due to its speed, this extract is quite complex. The suggested fingering shown in Fig. 3.18b is recommended for the performer. For example, in bar 114, the left hand stays almost entirely in the first position on the fingerboard. The first two and a half beat of this bar should be played in the first position while starting on the second half of beat 3, the hand is shifted to the second position and the fourth finger is used to play the *forte* g<sup>'''</sup> harmonic with the extension of the fourth finger at the end of the bar.

Unlike the previous trilled crotchets in bar 112 and bar 114, the trilled f<sup>'''</sup> tied note in bar 115 is given a *crescendo*. The performer should play this trilled note in the first position on the E string because this is the most relaxed position for all violinists. The trill in bar 115 should be played by the first and second fingers because these fingers are stronger than the third and fourth fingers and thus is easier to create the *crescendo* effect.

Fig. 3.18b: ms. 112-117 (Ka Wong's version).



The music becomes more complicated for the violinist in bars 116-117. The rapid arpeggiated four semiquavers with staccato quavers pattern in these two bars involves the use of both cross-string fingering and finger extension. The performer needs to

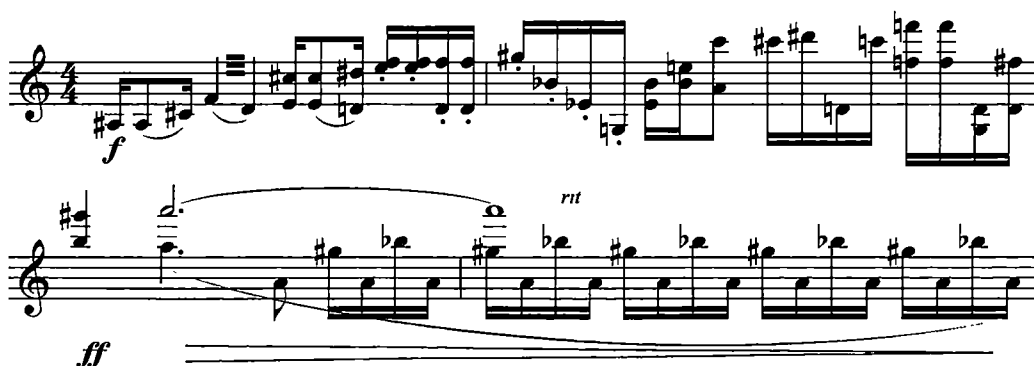


practise finger extension slowly: in the preparation stages his/her fourth finger needs to extend and reach the midpoint of the A string before being slightly rotated inward to touch the D string for playing the harmonic d" staccato quaver.

The performer must also find a way to execute the quick *forte* double-stop notes in bar 116. An effective way is to practise bowing and fingerings separately before uniting both hands in order to achieve fast double-stop notes. The bow length for these semiquavers has to be even and even pressure must be exerted onto them. The first and the third fingers need to stay on the b<sup>1</sup> and a<sup>1</sup> tied notes while the fourth finger plays the upper note of the trill. The performer should make sure his/her left hand is totally relaxed and the movement is limited to the fourth finger only for the trilled note. The *crescendo* effect must be done by the bow, i.e. either increase bow speed or exert more bow pressure onto the strings.

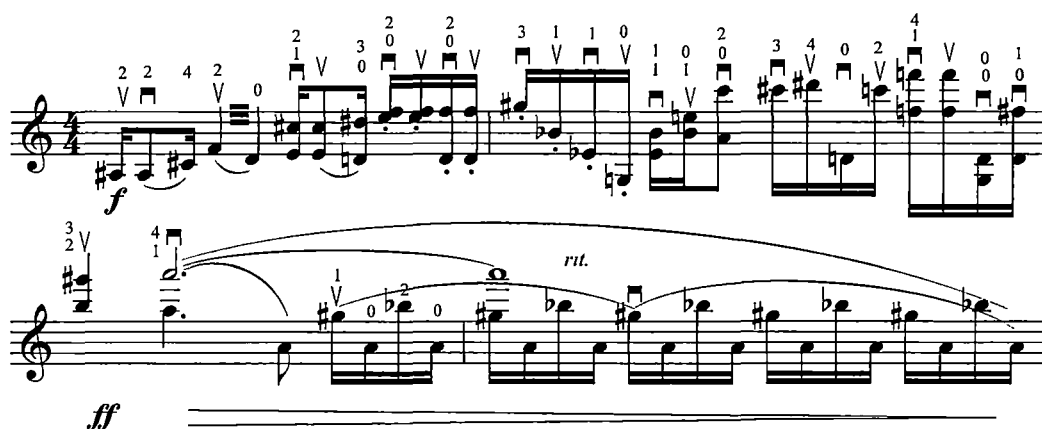
The music turns restless and agitated in bars 119-122 (See fig. 3.19a). The composer uses *tremolo*, big leaps, double stop staccatos and dissonant intervals to create a restless and anxious mood. The presence of dissonant intervals in bars 119-120 suggests the influence of western contemporary music on Tan Dun.

Fig. 3.19a: ms. 119-122 (Tan Dun's notation).



The double stops of the above extract are actually not difficult to play because most of them involve the use of open strings. However, the performer must beware of the choice of fingering and a list of suggested fingering is shown in Fig. 3.19b.

Fig. 3.19b: ms. 119-122 (Ka Wong's version).



The performer should treat the semiquaver  $a^{\sharp}$  as its enharmonic equivalent  $b^b$  as the interval formed between the first note of bar 119. The initial note of the *tremolo* is a “perfect fifth” acoustically, a  $b^b$  note should sound a little better than an  $a^{\sharp}$  when the note is followed by an  $f$ . Therefore the second finger should be used to perform the  $a^{\sharp}$  and  $f$ . The fourth finger is then designated to play the semiquaver  $c^{\sharp}$  instead of the normal third finger. The reason for using the fourth finger here is to avoid an unnecessary stretch of the third finger, thus making both the hand and fingers more comfortable.

The consecutive double-stop *staccato* chords on the fourth beat of bar 119 have to be performed in the first position on both the A-E strings and D-A strings. These *staccato* chords have to be played very shortly and the upper notes of the double stops should be performed with the second finger. In this way, when the music flows to the first

beat of the next bar, the third finger can be used to perform g<sup>#</sup> *staccato* instead of the weaker fourth finger.

Technically speaking, the last bar of the extract is quite difficult to play. First of all, it starts with two *forte* double stops which are done by using a slower bow speed and exerting more bow pressure onto the strings. The music continues with a semiquaver inner voice that has to be displayed with both *diminuendo* and *ritardando*. These repeated semiquavers resemble the rapid semiquaver pattern of bar 13 mentioned earlier. The performer should focus on the semiquavers and not the dotted minim nor the tied semibreve in the higher voice part. A skillful use of dynamic variations in this passage is more effective in performance.

### 3.3.4 Section C

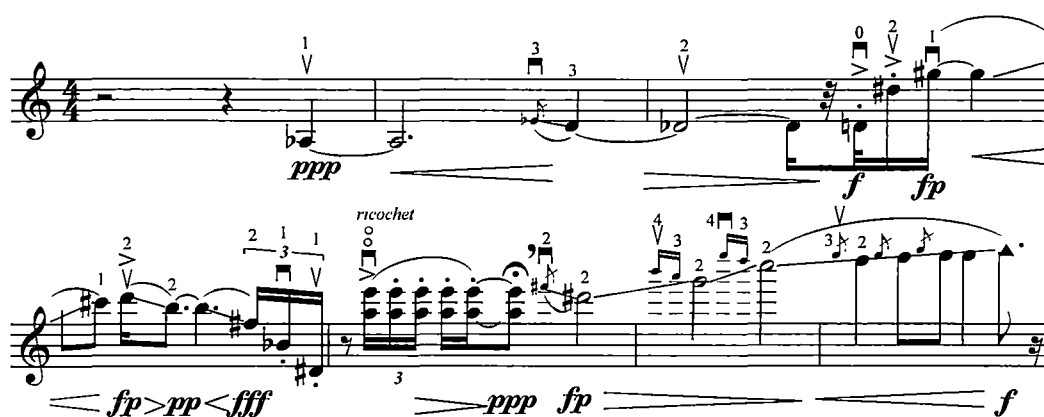
There is a change of speed from *Allegretto* to *Moderato* in Section C (bars 123-165). An extremely lyrical 12-bar solo violin melody is interrupted by the flute before approaching a *cadenza*-like passage in bar 138. Fig. 3.20a below shows the dynamic details written out by the composer in his manuscript.

Fig. 3.20a: ms. 138-144 (Tan Dun's notation).



The dynamic of this 7-bar extract ranges from *pianissimo* (*ppp*) to *fortissimo* (*fff*) with frequent use of *crescendo* and *diminuendo*. From the last beat of bar 138, the solo violin melody is extremely soft. The dynamic of volume contrasts greatly as the melody develops and approaches the high register notes in bar 144. Tan Dun has added a number of *portamenti* to make this extract more interesting. There is unique combination of *acciaccature* that fuses into the *glissando* in bars 143-144 when the melody line slides up to the unspecified pitch of the high dotted quaver in the last beat of bar 144. Fig. 3.20b below provides some useful fingering and bowing of the extract.

Fig. 3.20b: ms. 138-144 (Ka Wong's version).



The performer should play the  $a\flat$  with a slow up bow in *pianissimo*. The speed of the bow must accelerate to create a *crescendo* as the music moves towards the second beat of bar 139. The *portamento* in the fourth beat of this bar differs in treatment with the examples mentioned in the previous extracts. To build up an affectionate atmosphere, the *portamento* has to be slower than the normal ornamental realization. The slide between  $e\flat$  *acciaccatura* to the principal note should not be too fast. The *acciaccatura* must be played as a quaver, that shares half the note value of the crotchet  $d\sharp$ , instead of playing it as a hemidemisemiquaver  $e\flat$  followed by a double dotted  $d\sharp$  quaver. Below the staff, a *crescendo* and *diminuendo* sign is found embracing this *portamento*. The performer therefore should make sure the loudest point falls in the mid-way between the two notes of the *portamento*.

The music becomes agitated as it approaches bar 140, the three short notes in the bar ought to be played with fast bow strokes. To provide a better sound effect, the performer can use portion of the bow just below the mid-point of the lower half. A good control of speed and pressure of the bow is crucial in playing this extract. In accordance with the composer's intentions, the use of combined dynamics *fp* must be noted and presented carefully.

The long slide with *crescendo* is required for the last g<sup>#</sup>" crotchet of bar 140 and the c<sup>#</sup>" quaver in the first beat of the next bar. This slide should be performed with the first finger from second to fifth position on the E string. An accent should be added over the up bow d<sup>b</sup>" semiquaver on the second beat of bar 141 to correspond with Tan Dun's *fortepiano* indication just below the note. This accented note is to be played with a longer portion of the tip of the bow before sliding to its proceeding dotted b" quaver when the bow is near its midpoint.

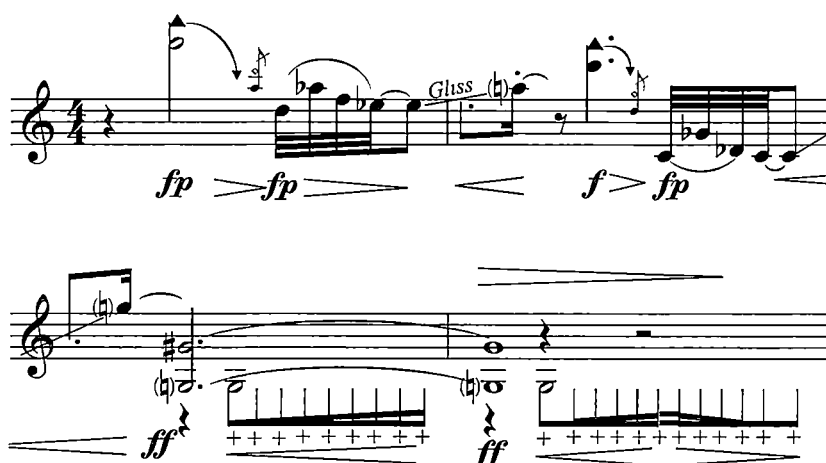
A well-controlled bow speed is essential as the *pianissimo* (*pp*) appear in middle of bar 141. Here at its midpoint, the bow then moves slowly with a gradual increase in bow pressure towards the first accented note of the triplets semiquavers. These semiquavers are to be played near the frog of the bow creating a *fortissimo* (*fff*) dynamic.

The series of repeated double-stop harmonics are to be played with *ricochet*. The performer should use down bows to play the first five double-stop harmonics in bar 142. To perform *ricochet* notes effectively, the middle portion of the bow should be used instead of employing either the tip or the frog. A loud *portamento* after the breath mark ( ' ) of bar 142 has to be played with the second finger on the fifth position of E string. The music then becomes softer at once as the d<sup>#</sup>" minim slides up to bar 143. There are two pairs of double *acciaccature* added along with this distinctive *glissando*. Although the *glissando* of this bar is to be played with *diminuendo*, each of the first notes of the double *acciaccature* should stand out with an additional accent being played by the fourth finger. In the next bar (bar 144), Tan Dun did not specify which three notes are to be played as *acciaccature*, and thus the performer should make his/her own choice on the notes. However, each of the *acciaccature* should be

accented to build up tension in the music. Although the pitch of the highest dotted note is not specified, it can be treated as a high harmonic e on the E string as that has a brilliant sound quality.

As a continuation of the previous extract, bars 145-148 shown in Fig. 3.21a maintains specific dynamic indications. The phrase should be played *forte* throughout with an occasional use of the combined dynamic, *fortepiano*, at the beginning of the demisemiquaver groups.

Fig. 3.21a: ms. 145-148 (Tan Dun's notation).



The phrase begins with an unusual high-pitched artificial-harmonic on the E string marked with a “triangle” note head on the score. Since there is no exact pitch given to this upper harmonic or the fundamental note of the minim under it, the performer can choose the starting note. The *glissando* must be played *forte* while the notes are in the high register of the violin. A *diminuendo* then occurs as the sliding action takes place. Another group of *fortepiano* with *diminuendo* appears as the music approaches the third beat of bar 145. An opposite dynamic indication of *crescendo* appears in the first beat of the next bar before a “sequence-like” music pattern occurs. In the second beat

of bar 147, Tan Dun reuses the technique presented in bars 47-49 (See fig. 3.12a). Tan Dun combines the technique of double-stop *legato* with left hand *pizzicato*, represented by a “cross” (+) placed under the notes, he added an *accelerando* and *ritardando* effect on to the *pizzicati* of the lower voice part of bar 148-149. The general dynamic of these two bars are *fortissimo* (*ff*) with *crescendo* and *diminuendo* accompanying *accelerando* and *ritardando* respectively.

Fig. 3.21b: ms. 145-148 (Ka Wong’s version).

The musical score for Figure 3.21b consists of two staves. The upper staff is in 4/4 time and features a treble clef. It includes various performance instructions such as "unmeasured ricochet on glissando", "Gliss. (b)", and "V". Dynamics range from fortissimo (*ff*) to fortissimo piano (*fp*). The score is divided into four measures, with measure numbers I, II, III, and IV indicated above the staff. The lower voice part includes a double-stop legato with left hand pizzicato, represented by a cross (+) under the notes.

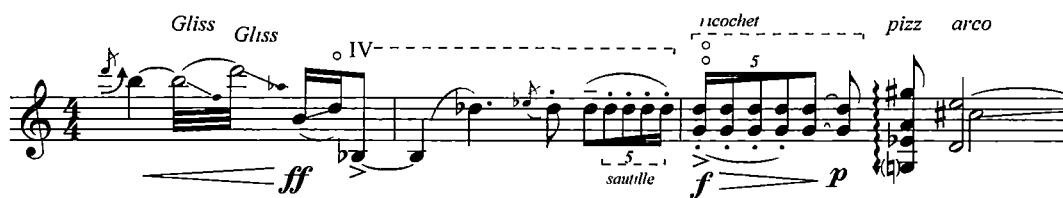
Fig. 3.21b provides suggested bowing and fingering of the material from bars 145 to 148. At the beginning of the extract, the performer needs to decide on which artificial-harmonic, marked as a solid triangle, they can choose from on the E string. The harmonic note can be a major third, a minor third, a perfect fourth, a perfect fifth, a major sixth or an octave apart from its fundamental note. The best way of bringing out the *forte* dynamic of the first beat is to use the middle of the bow. The speed of the bow from middle to tip is fast at the beginning, but it should slow down immediately as it approaches the tip of the bow to create a *diminuendo*. The sliding motion here should be fast with a relaxed left hand.



When the first finger of the left hand reaches the third position on the E string after the slide, the bow should cross to the A string to continue playing the demisemiquaver groups on the third beat of bar 145. The first note d<sup>2</sup> of the group should be accented with increasing bow speed which then immediately slows down as the music approaches the second to fourth demisemiquavers marked *diminuendo*. The performer should prepare to increase the dynamic again as his/her second finger prepares to play the next *portamento* between the first and second bar. The *crescendo* of the natural harmonic note is executed by an increase in bow speed or bow pressure. The music becomes loud again when it rises to the top harmonic *tremolo* in bar 146. The treatment of bowing is basically the same in this “sequence-like” repeating rhythm. However, unlike the previous rhythmic pattern, the performer should employ the first finger when playing the long slide between bars 146-147. The use of the first finger on the natural harmonic of g<sup>4</sup> semiquaver in bar 147 allows the performer to create an impressive sound. The music then indicates a distinctive double-stop with left hand *pizzicato* notes. The performer must make sure to achieve *crescendo* and *diminuendo* for both the voices of the music: which is the tied double-stop *legato* as well as the left hand *pizzicato*. The fourth finger of the left hand should be able to perform the effect of *accelerando* and *ritardando* clearly.

A combination of various techniques is present in bars 153-155 (See fig. 3.22a). At the beginning of this extract, Tan Dun uses a “normal” *portamento* which is followed by a reiteration of b<sup>2</sup> and d<sup>2</sup> with *crescendo*. Each of the two recurring notes is followed by a tiny, filled note head with a *glissando* indication. This combination of note reiteration and *glissando* builds up tension and creates a similar effect made by the *tremolo* minim with *glissando* in bar 12.

Fig. 3.22a: ms. 153-155 (Tan Dun's notation).



The music then approaches to a *fortissimo* phrase that needs to be played on the G string. Bar 154 begins with a big leap from  $b^b$  crotchet to  $d^b$  dotted crotchet, the music then proceeds to a series of repeated  $d^b$  *staccato*. The accelerating quintuplet note-pattern resembles those in bar 13 that produce a restless and irritable atmosphere. Here, the music imitates the sound of the *ban*, typical wooden clappers used in the Peking opera orchestra.

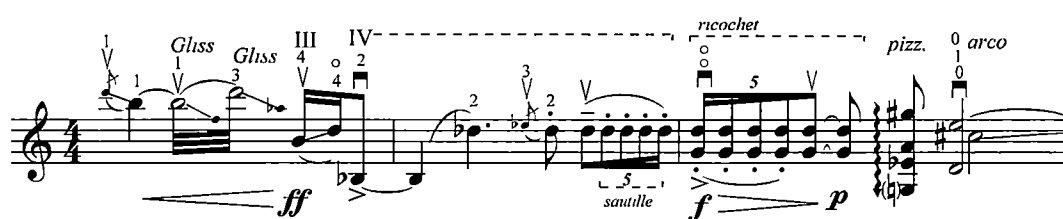
A “mirrored” quintuplet note pattern follows immediately, but is given in the form of double-stopped notes with the French indication *ricochet*. Here even though the quintuplet is reversed with repeated  $d$  and  $g$  *staccato*, the music does not show any sign of tiresomeness because of the use of diminuendo in the first half of bar 155. The loud downward *pizzicato* chord then appears before the tied minim that concludes the bar.

The performer should play the above extract using the articulation, bowing and fingering listed in Fig. 3.22b. Starting with the first finger, the  $d$  *acciaccatura* in bar 153 should slide to the cohering  $b$  crotchet using the same finger from the third position to the first position of the E string. Once the *portamento* is over, the performer needs to shift his/her hand up again and make sure the first finger is on the fourth position of the E string before reaching the second beat. The reiteration of  $b$  and  $d$  on

this beat is intricate with the use of *glissando*. Each of the two alternate recurring notes is followed by a tiny note head in the score, and thus the first and the third fingers need to play b<sup>♮</sup> and d<sup>♮</sup> alternately while sliding down from the fourth position to the first position on the E string. The left hand must be relaxed when performing the slide and the *crescendo* under the recurring notes has to be done by exerting bow pressure or increasing the speed of the bow. The performer should hold the violin tighter at the beginning of the first beat of bar 153. In this way, the left hand fingers can be more relaxed and can concentrate on the repeated notes with *glissando*.

To start the fourth beat of bar 153, the fourth finger must be placed in the second position on the D string. The slide between the two semiquavers is to be played by a stretch of the fourth finger together with an upward hand shift on the string. It is done in this fashion because the interval between b<sup>♮</sup> and d<sup>♮</sup> semiquaver is a minor third and the b<sup>♮</sup> has to be played as a harmonic.

Fig. 3.22b: ms. 153-155 (Ka Wong's version).



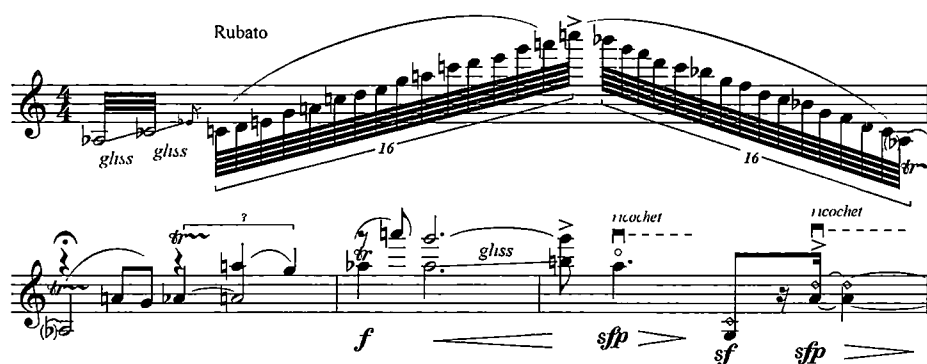
Since bar 154 is marked with a *Sul G* (IV) bracket by the composer, a great leap in hand position is necessary when playing the first beat crotchet b to the dotted crotchet d<sup>♭</sup> of the second beat. The performer should note carefully that the *acciaccatura* before the *staccato* d<sup>♭</sup> quaver in bar 154 is just a normal ornament instead of a *portamento*, therefore a 3-2 fingering should be used. The six repeated *staccato* d<sup>♭</sup> in the bar is

group in a single slur by the composer, however, to create better dramatic effect, the performer ought to separate the quaver with *acciaccatura* from the rest of the quintuplet notes. In order to imitate the sound of the *ban*, the first note of the accelerating quintuplet should be played with as a *tenuto* note and the other four to be performed as *sautillé*.

Since the “mirrored” quintuplet in bar 155 is double-stopped notes and has to be played with the *ricochet* technique, the *diminuendo* under these notes should be done by increasing the bow pressure with the right hand. The quaver chord in the second half of the bar should be plucked in the reverse direction from higher E string to G string. This chord, marked with *forte*, must be plucked with the middle finger of the right hand to create the louder sound intended by the composer.

A rhapsodic-like section then appears between bars 162-165 (Fig. 3.23a). The first two beats in this bar are a reiteration with *glissando*, similar to those in bar 153. However, the direction of the *glissando* in bar 162 is different. The two beats repetition of  $a^b$  and  $c^b$  slide upward until they subsequently reaches  $c^b$  and  $e^b$ . A *rubato* indication then appears at the beginning of two tuplets groups. Each group, containing 16 hemidemisemiquavers, is to be played within the time value of one beat. The lowest  $c^b$  tuplets ascends in a Chinese whole-tone scale pattern to the highest  $c^{b''''}$  before descending down to  $a^b$  that is tied to the next bar. This fast phrase pattern is a typical example found at the cadential point of many violin concertos after the nineteenth century.

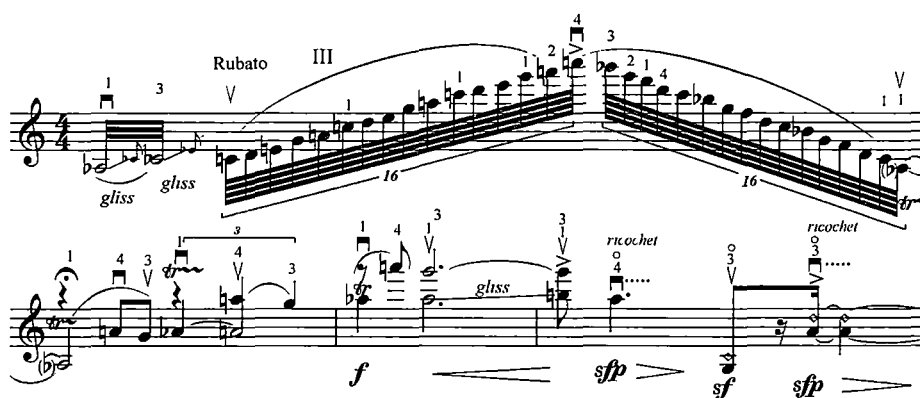
Fig. 3.23a: ms. 162-165 (Tan Dun's notation).



The latter half of this extract is dominated by trills and notes played with *ricochet*. In bar 163, the motif (a<sup>b</sup> minim with the a<sup>b</sup>' and g' quavers) is repeated twice within bars 163-164. A remarkably long *glissando* can also be found there. Since the sliding action takes up three beats in total and the interval between the sliding notes are only a major second apart, the speed of this slide is quite slow. The two *ricochet* notes in bar 165 contain the dynamic indications of *sfp* plus *decrescendo*, therefore they are not similar to the *ricochet* double stops used in Fig. 3.20a (bars 138-144) and Fig. 3.22a (bars 153-155) that were mentioned earlier.

The first two beats of this extract (See fig. 3.23b) is a repetition with *glissando* on G string, similar to those in bar 153, so the performer should again hold the violin tighter at the beginning of bar 162 and allow the left hand to relax and focus on the sliding action and alteration of fingers. Moreover, the performer should not exert too much finger pressure onto the G string, or the passage becomes more difficult to execute.

Fig. 3.23b: ms. 162-165 (Ka Wong's version).



The *rubato* triplet groups are relatively easier to play because this type of *ascending* and *descending* triplet pattern can often be found in violin concertos. The complexity for performing these triplets lies in the performance indication of *rubato*. To build up tension and mood to the music, the performer should first think of these two triplet beats as a single musical phrase. Then divide this phrase into three parts and perform it in the sequence of *slow-fast-slow* pace. The acceleration occurs in the third beat of bar 162, while retardation happens in the fourth beat of the bar. Both action must be accompanied with a *crescendo* and a *diminuendo* and the  $c^{\sharp'''}$  must be accented and be treated as the midway point of this phrase.

The performer should be aware of the dissonant melodic intervals in bar 163-164 and to express the  $a^{\flat}$  minim with the  $a^{\flat'}$  and  $g'$  quaver motif clearly. These dissonant intervals' sections are then linked to the last bar with a long *glissando* that is to be played with slower *glissandi*. The next two *ricochet* notes in 165 are  $a^{\sharp}$  harmonic note and an artificial harmonic note respectively. They are to be played using the middle of the bow and bow pressure is exerted onto the string directly at the first note. The rebounding action of the bow that follows will enable the performer to play the rest of the *ricochet* notes on that beat.

### 3.3.5 Section D

Indicated as *Andante moderato*, the 17-bar Section D (bars 166-183) is dominated by the solo violin that brings out a gloomy, Chinese operatic aria-like melody that resembles the voice of Peking opera actress. Tan Dun once said:

I hope that the audience listening to the violin solo will think of a Peking opera actress' aria, and rhymed dialogue, the Peking opera's fiddle accompaniment, and the orchestra may remind the audience of Peking opera's sonority and atmosphere.<sup>166</sup>

The melody allows the audience to associate with traditional Chinese music because of Tan Dun's use of *portamento* and his choice of tonality. The solo violin melody, the soft western-liked chordal wind accompaniment and the sound of the tubular bells seem to project a cross-culturally mixed musical picture of grief and loneliness. The overall mood and "story line" of section D and subsequent war-like sections coincide with that of the legendary Peking opera repertoire *Bawang Bieji* ("Farewell My Concubine").

"Farewell My Concubine", brought to its highest fame by the legendary singer Mei Lanfang (See fig. 3.24), tells us the famous historical story of the conquered *Xichu Bawang* ("King of West Chu"). Xiang Yu (232-202 BC), King of West Chu, bids farewell to his favorite Concubine Yuji. When his troops are about to be smashed, Xiang Yu asks Yuji to flee for her survival, leaving him behind. Yuji refuses to leave

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<sup>166</sup> Composition and Remarks, "Out of Peking Opera," *Tan Dun Onlnet* [home page on-line]; available from <http://www.tandunonline.com/Composition/composition.asp?id=25&s=3>; Internet; accessed 13 May 2007.

alone; instead, she cuts her throat after performing her last sword dance for her beloved king, sacrificing her life for love and loyalty.

Imitating the Peking Opera aria, the solo violin melody seems to narrate Yuji's sadness and lonesomeness before she committing suicide. The performer therefore must make sure to express this angst and poignant feeling while playing this brief section.

Fig. 3.24: Renowned Peking Opera Singer Mei Lanfang as Yuji in

*Farewell My Concubine*<sup>167</sup>



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<sup>167</sup> VCD booklet, *Four Great Bearded Men and Four Great Dan Actors*, (Guangdong: Heilongjing Cultrual Video Publishing, 2003), 36.



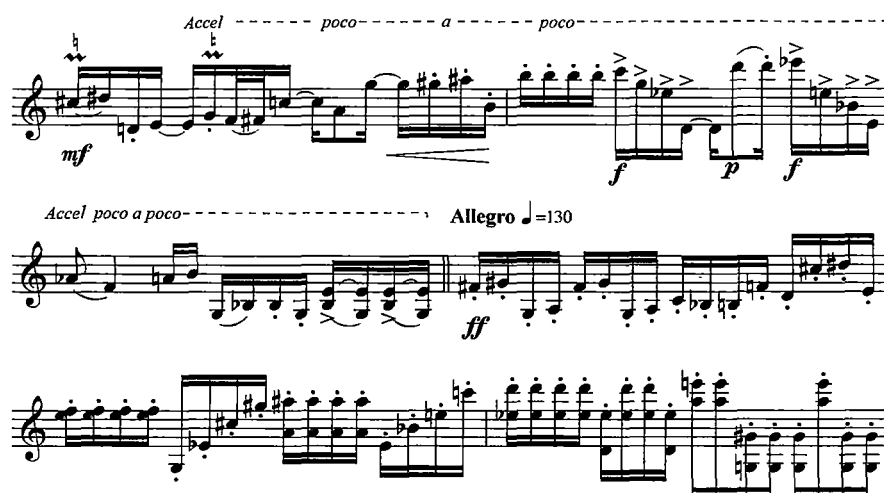
### 3.3.6 Section E

The music becomes more agitated in Section E (bars 184-205) as the orchestral *tutti* brings about a war-like scene. Two opposing armed troupes of soldiers seem to approach each other in the battle. In bars 192-196, the brass sections imitate the sound of battle horns before the fight took place. The solo violin displays the mood of soldiers who apprehend there is danger on all sides and how they meet the opposing troupe (bars 196-205). Played by the woodwinds, the “genuine” Peking opera melody (bars 1-2) leads the music to the following section.

### 3.3.7 Section F

Marked with *Adagio* ( $\text{♩}=30$ ), Section F (bars 206-241) displays the actual sword fighting between the soldiers as in the legend of “Farewell My Concubine”. The solo violin enters and accelerates from bar 208 to bar 210 before going into a nervous *fortissimo Allegro* ( $\text{♩}=130$ ) sector (See fig. 3.25a). The first 8 bars of this section comprised almost entirely of *staccato* semiquavers and occasional appearances of dissonant intervals that signify the sounds made by the collision of swords’ blades and running horses during combat. A *crescendo* from *mezzo-forte* to *fortissimo* (*ff*) is necessary to accompany the *accelerando poco a poco* from bars 208-210.

Fig. 3.25a: ms. 208-213 (Tan Dun’s notation).



To overcome tempo, dynamic and tone quality problems of the above extract, the performer must make sure to start accelerating slowly on the second beat of bar 208. The *accelerando* from *Adagio* ( $\text{♩}=30$ ) to *Allegro* ( $\text{♩}=130$ ) (bars 208-210) has to be gradual with the presence of a *crescendo* from *mezzo-forte* to *fortissimo* (*ff*). To create a proper “combat atmosphere”, the performer should obtained a rough, noisy sound by using the middle of the bow to play the first three bars of this extract.

Fig. 3.25b contains suggested fingering that is logically derived to help the performer achieve better musical effect when playing this extract. The performer must carefully note the use of *collé* when the music enters bar 211. To exert more force and create the battle atmosphere, the lower part of the bow is used to strike the strings rapidly in separate “high-bouncing” bow strokes. The use of *collé* is in some way similar to *saltando*, except that the latter is played using the upper part of the bow. The sound of each of these *staccato* notes has to be made very clear. The suggested fingering in Fig. 3.25b is used to avoid unnecessary left hand shift and to ensure to achieve better intonation in this agitated sector.

Fig. 3.25b: ms. 208-213 (Ka Wong’s version).

The musical score for Fig. 3.25b consists of three systems of music. The first system (measures 208-210) begins with a mezzo-forte (*mf*) dynamic and includes tempo markings of *Accel* and *poco a poco*. The second system (measures 211-213) starts with a fortissimo (*ff*) dynamic and includes a tempo marking of *Allegro* with a metronome marking of 130. The score is written for a single melodic line in 4/4 time, featuring a series of staccato notes with suggested fingerings (0-4) and bowing techniques (collé). The dynamics range from mezzo-forte (*mf*) to fortissimo (*fff*).

The combat atmosphere continues to flow in Section F with occasional flashes of melodious phrases. Fig. 3.26a shows one of these phrases that is to be played with *fortissimo* (*fff*). The appearance of contrasting phrases adds interest to the music, thus the intonation of this phrase becomes more important.

Fig. 3.26a: ms. 233-236 (Tan Dun's notation).



To present the music effectively, the performer must use the suggested fingering listed in Fig. 3.26b. Beginning from bar 233, this extract commences in the first position on D string. The second e" minim is to be played with the second finger on the third position of the A string. Although the following note c#" is a minor third lower than the previous minim, the first finger is used. Without changing any hand or arm positions, c#" can be performed with the first finger moving further away from the fingerboard and at the same time retaining the left-hand first position to perform the melody in successive bars more accurately. Even though the *portamenti* here need no special technique and effect, the performer must remember not to exert finger pressure on the fingerboard. The sliding finger should just touch the string during the sliding action. The finger can then press onto the fingerboard once the finger reaches the targeted note after the slide.

Fig. 3.26b: ms. 233-236 (Ka Wong's version).

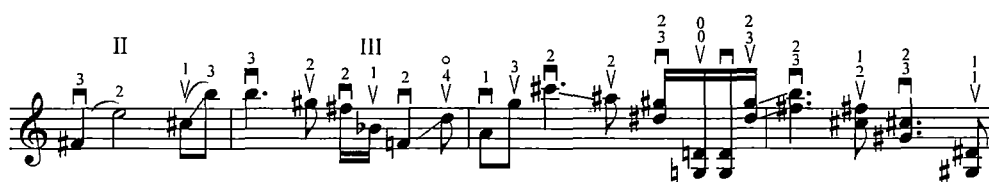


Fig. 3.27a shows an example of excitement, anger from the latter part of section F. The thrilling music resembles the battle scenes found in a number of Peking operas, such as operas *Zhan Tai Ping* ("Fight for Peace"), *Bai Di Cheng* ("Baidi City") and *Ding*

*Jun Shan* (“Mountain for Settling Troupe”). This extract consists of a series of *sforzando* (*sf*) double-stop, chords and broken chords before moving towards Section G in *Adagio*. The music slows down as it enters the new section and then immediately presents a forceful double-stop semiquaver sextuplet. The double *portamenti* in bar 243 is supported by the reappearance of the combat sword colliding theme presented by the *tutti* strings.

Fig. 3.27a: ms. 240-245 (Tan Dun’s notation).



The series of *sforzando* (*sf*) double-stops, chords and broken chords in bars 240-242 have to be played very loudly. Using the lower half of the bow just above the “frog” of the bow, each of the double-stops, chords and broken chords has to be played with the bow mark on Fig. 3.27b. To perform chords that contain four notes effectively, the performer must first place his/her left hand fingers onto the respective position on the strings, then use the bow to touch the lowest strings (G and D). Once the lowest note is sounded loudly, the bow then crosses to the higher-sounding strings (A and E) with the change of forearm angle. For example, the quaver chord on the second beat of bar 240 must be played loudly with the finger placed on the appropriate position before the bowing action takes place. To play the following broken chords successfully, the performer must first treat them as chords and again place the left hand fingers on the four notes together before bowing the strings.

A change of mood from *Allegro* to *Adagio* occur once the music enters Section G, thus a *ritenuto* has to be used on the first beat of bar 242. The forceful double-stop semiquaver sextuplet resembles Peking Opera’s cymbals music before passing the major melody to the *tutti* part.

Fig. 3.27b: ms. 240-245 (Ka Wong’s version).

The musical score consists of two staves. The top staff is in 4/4 time and contains measures 240 through 244. It features a series of double-stop semiquaver sextuplets, each marked with a 'V' and a dynamic of *sf*. Above the notes are fingerings: 4 0 4 1, 3 2 2 1, 0 2 2 4, 3 2 2 1, 0 2 2 4, 3 2 2 1, 3 2 2 1, and 3 2 2 1. The bottom staff begins with a box labeled 'G Adagio' and contains measures 242 through 245. Measure 242 starts with a *ritenuto* marking and a double-stop semiquaver sextuplet with a 'V' and *sf* dynamic. This is followed by a melodic line with a slur and a 'gliss' marking. The staff concludes with a double bar line and a '2' indicating a second ending. Above the staff, the tempo change is indicated as 'Accel ---- poco ---- a ---- poco'.

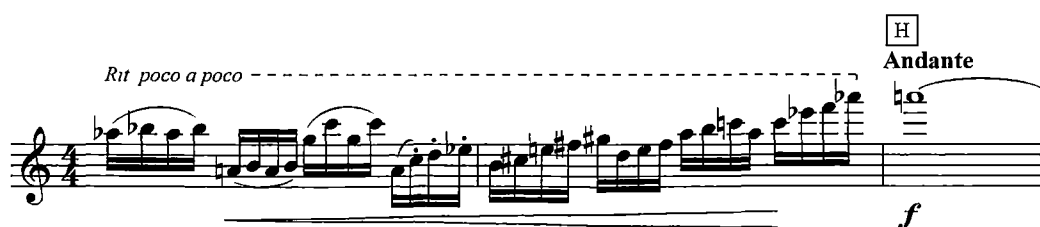
### 3.3.8 Section G

Lasting for only 4 bars (bars 242-245), the short *Adagio* section at the beginning of Section G abruptly cools down the musical “peak” with the appearance of *tutti* winds. The strings then present the “fighting” theme (bars 211-213) again with an accelerating speed. The *accel. poco a poco* indication lasts from bars 243-245 before changing its *tempo* to the speedy *Allegro vivace*.

The newly marked *Allegro vivace* (bars 246-268) is the “true” climax of this Concerto. The solo violin further developed the “fighting” theme between some brassy episodes in this tempo. In order to create a vivid combative atmosphere, Tan Dun allows the solo violin to build up dynamic tension along with other *tutti* instruments that double the theme. The violin first performs in *forte* and then in *fortississimo* (*fff*) as it approaches to the next section. A *rit. poco a poco* mark is given on top of bar 264 to allow the solo violin to slow down and enter the *Andante* section H smoothly.

Fig. 3.28a shows the last two bars of section G as it approaches the next section. Though the rhythmic pattern is still four semiquavers to one beat as in the “fighting” theme, the articulation and bowing is different. Each the first three beats of bar 267 are to be played with one single bow-stroke and *staccati* can be found in the last beat of this bar.

Fig. 3.28a: ms. 267-269 (Tan Dun’s notation).



The performer should start with a down bow when performing bar 267 and allow the left hand to play in the most convenient and comfortable way. Fig. 3.28b provides suggested bowing and fingering of the extract (bars 267-269). The performer should stay in the lower hand position wherever possible because of this quick *tempo* and the necessity of observing *ritardando* and *crescendo* at the same time. Playing noisily with the *tutti* orchestra, the solo violin must forcefully perform the semiquavers in bar 268 in *collé* with separate bows. In this way, the music can help in signifying the “end of the war” before it reaches the semibreve  $\text{a}^{\sharp\text{m}}$  in Section H.

Fig. 3.28b: ms. 267-269 (Ka Wong’s version).

The image shows a musical score for a violin part, measures 267-269. The score is written on a single staff in 4/4 time. The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The tempo is marked 'Andante'. The score includes suggested bowing and fingering for the left hand. The first measure (267) starts with a down bow and a semibreve rest. The second measure (268) is a semibreve rest. The third measure (269) is a semibreve rest. The score is marked with 'Rit poco a poco' and 'Andante'. The final measure (269) is marked with a forte 'f' dynamic. The score is labeled 'H' in a box.



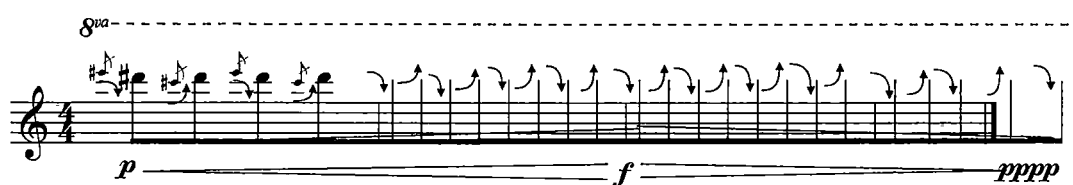
### 3.3.9 Section H

Section H (bars 269-294) is somewhat like a “coda” to this Concerto. A sweet yet melancholic Peking Opera aria like theme is played by the solo violin as if describing the misery of combat. This sorrowful tune is occasionally supported by some loud brassy interjections. The performer has to be very careful with the alteration of dynamic markings, as well as singing the “aria” as expressively as possible.

The final four bars of this Concerto are extremely important because they resolve the combative and gloomy atmosphere before the music “fades out.” This ending is a tribute to bars 10-11 (Fig. 3.8a) because of its similar use of a series of *portamenti* before the repeated  $d^{\sharp'''}$ . The melody gains velocity through the *crescendo* marking, to the end of bar 292. A “mirror” pattern in rhythm and dynamic appears in the next two bars before ending the work in *pianississimo* (*pppp*).

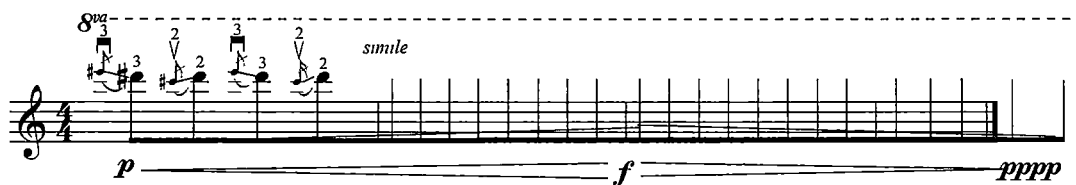
Like many modern composers such as Lutoslawski, Chou Wen-Chung and Toru Takemitsu, Tan Dun used “new” musical notation in his works. He employed a contemporary music notation in bars 291-294 by just writing down the principal notes and their *acciaccature* as shown in Fig. 3.29a. The note heads as well as the *acciaccature* in the next three bars are not written out completely. Moreover, the last two principal notes even go beyond the closing double bar-line of this Concerto marking this work as an extraordinary “modern” composition.

Fig. 3.29a: ms. 291-294 (Tan Dun's notation).



The *portamenti* and their principal notes in this extract are to be played using same fingering. A useful fingering and bowing are marked in Fig. 3.29b. The performer must observe the dynamic variation here carefully and stress very slightly the *acciaccature* before all principal notes. The “fading out” effect incorporated in the last two bars must be done smoothly making the notes as clear as possible. The performer must abandon the use of bow in the last bar (bar 294) where only the third and the second fingers perform the sliding action on the fingerboard.

Fig. 3.29b: ms. 291-294 (Ka Wong's version).



### **3.4 Cultural influences on *Out of Peking Opera* violin concerto**

#### **Structure**

The structure of the *Out of Peking* violin concerto is dissimilar from the customary three-movement concerto format. It is performed as a single continuous movement, that coincides with the plots that often occur in real Peking operas. Crafted with an introduction, the concerto contains a rapid movement, a solo cadenza for the violin, a lyrical section as well as a dramatic ending.

#### **Instrumentation**

The *Out of Peking Opera* violin concerto uses a “western” orchestral instrumentation in a manner that creates an outstanding balance between the orchestra, the Chinese percussion instruments and the solo violin. The orchestration of this percussive concerto includes one piccolo, two flutes, two oboes, two clarinets, two bassoons, four horns, three trumpets, three trombones, tuba, four percussionists (performing with woodblock, timpani, Chinese gongs, snare drum, crash cymbals and tam tam), a harp, strings plus solo violin. If we simply observe the type of musical instruments being used, the Chinese percussion instruments, such as the different sizes of Chinese gongs, provide an instant confirmation of the extent of Chinese musical elements in this work.

### **Melody and Performing style**

The concerto does not contain specific musical elements from Peking opera; however, it was clearly based on its traditional style. In the solo violin parts and the orchestra section, Tan Dun attempted to obtain a new and freer musical language while retaining the character of his earlier style of Peking Opera. There is an abundance of Chinese musical elements found in the work, including music produced by *jinghu*, Peking operatic *dan* and Chinese percussion instruments. Aside from using oriental melodies with *portamenti*, Tan Dun applied a reasonable amount of Western dissonant melodic intervals to create a distinctive twentieth century cross-cultural language in the music. The concerto should be performed in a manner that explores both Chinese and Western elements. This is because the music is partly in the style of *jinghu* music, partly lyrical as the aria sung by Peking operatic *dan*, and partly as rhythmic Chinese percussion music.

### 3.4.1 Cultural factors influences the creation of *Out of Peking Opera* violin concerto

Similar to the *I Ching* violin concerto, Tan Dun's *Out of Peking Opera* violin concerto also belongs to the category of cross-cultural music. The concerto uses melodies and rhythms that contain exotic elements. The term "exotic" in this context also refers to "Chinese" elements from the view point of a westerner. Subsequently, the *Out of Peking Opera* violin concerto has appropriated non-Western musical sounds, most especially melody and rhythm from Peking Opera music. Since the composer was an instrumentalist in a Peking Opera company, his knowledge and awareness of the operas provided him with ideas later in his composition career as well as musical elements from the Peking Opera. The concerto was written in 1987 when Tan Dun first arrived the United States. The composer found a way to relieve his loneliness and expressed his feeling for the new environment by composing this piece of music. His homesick feelings are expressed in his notes to G. Schirmer, publisher of the concerto:

I began this piece when I first came to New York and left behind the ancient continuity of Chinese society. I saw new things, and began to make connections between my own thoughts and the rest of the world. I felt refreshed, lamenting. I started to see my past more clearly.<sup>168</sup>

The large number of Chinese *portamenti* and percussive rhythms used in the concerto as well as the utilization of Western dissonant melodic intervals in this work has placed it as a work of cross-cultural world music.

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<sup>168</sup> Tan Dun – Out of Peking Opera, *G. Schirmer Inc.* [home page on-line]; available from [http://www.schirmer.com/Default.aspx?TabId=2420&State\\_2874=2&workId\\_2874=33572](http://www.schirmer.com/Default.aspx?TabId=2420&State_2874=2&workId_2874=33572); Internet; accessed 10 July 2007.

### 3.4.2 Conclusion on cultural context of *Out of Peking Opera*

#### violin concerto

As discussed in chapter three, by investigating the melody and stylistic performance demands, the structure and instrumentation of the *Out of Peking Opera* violin concerto, I found that the concerto falls more into the category of Chinese music. I assess the overall Eastern and Western influence in the composition as roughly 2/3 being of traditional Chinese character while roughly 1/3 is Western. The solo violin with western orchestra demonstrates a fusion of Chinese musical elements that blend with contemporary Western harmony. Even though the music looks “contemporary”, the overall Chinese sentiment and atmosphere permeate the concerto. The latter half of the work (section F to H) displays both *dan*’s (female actress’) aria as well as the dramatic fighting music gestures as found in Peking Opera. These elements all contribute to my view of this work as essentially Chinese with a Western influence.

### **3.5      *Out of Peking Opera* violin concerto – A conclusion**

*Out of Peking Opera* Violin Concerto is one of Tan Dun's most significant works in that genre. There are plenty of Chinese musical elements being used in this Concerto. In order to perform the music in an accurate way, the performer should gain some knowledge in the following three types of Chinese music that are being evoked in the concerto. This music includes those produced by *jinghu*, Peking operatic *dan* and Chinese percussion instruments. Below are some suggested types of Chinese music with which performer should acquaint themselves.

#### **Jinghu Music**

Similar to the second movement: *Wind* of Sitsky's *I Ching* Violin Concerto, *Out of Peking Opera* opens with a "real" Peking opera tune. This cheerful tune pattern and melody sounds very similar to the interludes of the *Xun* School Peking operas. Thus listening to interludes of the operas *Hong Niang* ("Lady Hong") and *Yu Tang Cun* ("Spring of the Jade Hall") could be helpful for improving performance.

#### **Chinese Percussion Music**

All Peking opera orchestras include Chinese percussion instruments. The performer should listen to the sound of "Gong" and "Cymbals" in particular when listening to such operas because the solo violin sometimes imitates such sounds in the work.

### Dan Aria

The performer should listen to some famous Peking Opera repertoire such as *Bawang Bieji* (“Farewell My Concubine”), *Guifei Zuijiu* (“The Drunken Beauty”) and *Ganning Baiqi Jieweiying* (‘Ganning Raids the Wei Camp with a Hundred Cavalrymen’) etc. These operas contain lyrical arias as well as fighting scenes’ music that coincide with the moods of *Out of Peking Opera*.

Aside from listening to Chinese music, the performer must have good imagination when playing this work. A detailed analysis of the score is necessary because the frequent mood, dynamic and tempo changes. Regarding to the technical effects of the work, there are lots of *portamenti*. To apply such techniques properly, the performer should relax his/her left hand and shift the finger from one position to another. Bow speed and bow pressure are frequently used to enhance the volume of the *portamenti*. This is the same as in Sitsky’s *I Ching* Violin Concert. The performer should remember that *Out of Peking Opera* contains not only Chinese musical elements, but also demonstrates Western musical style as in the composer’s String Quartet *Feng Ya Song*. This award winning work allowed the composer to gain a Weber prize in composition in 1983.<sup>169</sup> Thus it can serve as a useful material for performer to more deeply understand Tan Dun’s musical style and cross-cultural works in general.

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<sup>169</sup> Tan Dun, “Bio in Depth,” *Tan Dun Onlinet* [home page on-line]; available from <http://www.tandunonline.com/biography/?id=2>; Internet; accessed 18 May 2007.



## **CHAPTER 4    A CONCISE SUMMARY FOR PERFORMING CROSS-CULTURAL VIOLIN COMPOSITIONS**

In the previous chapters, we have discussed what cross-cultural music is and how Western music influenced the Chinese world. The cross-cultural music is a significant issue in the history of music development in China and has greatly help in the spread and promotion of contemporary Chinese music. In the second and third chapters, I have examined and analysed the necessary technical solutions needed for effective performance of the two cross-cultural violin compositions by Larry Sitsky and Tan Dun that form the central basis of this research. I have also discussed cross-cultural music as part of cultural appropriation, as well as seeking to evaluate the extent of Western and Chinese influences upon the composers of these concertos.

Cross-cultural music, a small segment of World music, has been a popular issue since 1980s. A number of contemporary composers are focused on writing cross-cultural music. With their efforts in promoting such compositions, an increasing number of artists and art groups have become interested in the topic and begun their own exploration of cross-cultural music. As mentioned earlier, there were many noteworthy violin compositions written by major composers in the twentieth century. These composers were exposed to a range of different cultural influences with the development of technology. Transportation also broke down the “boundaries” between countries and cross-cultural violin music that was a by-product of this is still rising in popularity.

Sitsky's *I Ching* violin concerto is a major example of cross-cultural violin music written at the end of the twentieth century. The frequent presence of Chinese musical elements in the work and its eight-movement structure has made it an extraordinary concerto for violinists to explore. Concerning the technical side of the work, the frequent use of *portamenti* and other imitative melodies resemble the sound of the *erhu* and other traditional Chinese musical instruments such as the *zheng* and the *xiao*. To make the violin sound similar to those sounds created by Chinese instruments, the performer should listen to the *erhu*, the *guqin*, the *zheng* and the *xiao* before imitating these sounds. A general knowledge on I Ching theory and the sounds of Chinese musical instruments as well as an in depth understand of the composer's life with compositional background are important elements to understand in order to achieve an effective performance of this concerto. However, the performer should bear in mind that the *I Ching* violin concerto is not completely Chinese in style. From my observation, the ratio of Western and Chinese influence on the work is roughly two-thirds to one-third. Thus the performer must decide on where to express a particular musical style and in general, the Concerto should sound like a contemporary western music than a traditional Chinese work performed by Western musical instruments.

*Out of Peking Opera* violin concerto, Tan Dun's most important violin work, also contains many Chinese musical elements. Tan's music includes sounds associated with those produced by *jinghu*, Peking operatic *dan* and Chinese percussion instruments. Knowledge of interludes and arias of Peking operas (especially those belong to the *Xun* School), *jinghu* and Chinese percussion instruments such as gong and cymbals, will be very helpful when performing Tan Dun's *Out of Peking Opera*. The imaginative mind of the soloist is also a crucial factor in achieving success in

performance. Since there are frequent alterations of mood, dynamics and tempo in the Concerto, a detailed analysis of the score is essential for the performer. Similar to Sitsky's *I Ching* violin concerto, *Out of Peking Opera* contains not only Chinese musical elements, but also demonstrates Western musical style. From my own perspective, the ratio of Western and Chinese influence on the work is roughly one third to two-thirds and therefore the performer must remember that this piece of music must sound more like a contemporary Chinese work rather than a Western composition.

My research is aimed at providing detailed technical solutions to specific technical demands in these two concertos. These solutions are enhanced through an understanding of interpretation of cross-cultural performance practice issues in these works. Even though the origins of cross cultural influences can be unclear, the process of Cross-Cultural Fusion has been taking place in all parts of the world. Being very fashionable and prominent in the recent decades, cross-cultural music may remain a major interest to many composers and music lovers in decades to come.

The two violin concertos by Larry Sitsky and Tan Dun were two distinctive contemporary compositions that truly fuse the worlds of East and West. To perform both works well, violinists must first understand the basic concept of cross-cultural music and world music. They should also learn the detailed compositional backgrounds of the two works, the ideas underpinning them and the textural and timbral modes and sounds that the composer wants to achieve. After obtaining such knowledge, the performer should analyse the works in depth and to find the most appropriate ways to play the two concertos effectively. The suggested fingerings and articulations detailed in this paper and the attached appendices constitute the research

findings that allow the performer to play the compositions in a manner appropriate to the complex styles they respectively represent. I strongly advised the performer to explore the different types of Chinese music and cross-cultural works by contemporary composers, with those of Larry Sitsky and Tan Dun being at the forefront of this these cross-cultural trends.

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## APPENDIX A

### List of selected contemporary composers who have written cross-cultural music

Name	Year of Birth and Death	Birth place	Residence of/ Active in
Boyd, Anne	b. 1946	Sydney, Australia	Australia
Chan, Wíng Wah	b. 1954	Hong Kong, China	Hong Kong
Chen, Gang	b. 1935	Shanghai, China	China
Chen, Peixun	b. 1921	Hong Kong, China	Hong Kong
Chen, Yi	b. 1953	Guangzhou, China	USA
Chen, Qigang	b. 1955	Shanghai, China	France
Chou Wen Chung	b. 1923	Chefoo, China	USA
Guo, Wenjing	b. 1956	Chongqing, China	China
Huang, Anlun	b. 1955	Guangzhou, China	Canada
Lam, Bun-Ching	b. 1954	Macao, China	France
Lam, Doming	b. 1926	Macao, China	Hong Kong
Qu, Xiaosong	b. 1952	Guizhou, China	USA
Sheng, Bright	b. 1955	Shanghai, China	USA
Sitsky, Larry	b. 1934	Tianjin, China	Australia
Su Cong	b. 1957	Tianjin, China	Germany
Sun, Daniel	1954-1996	Beijing, China	Australia
Takemitsu, Toru	1930-1996	Tokyo, Japan	Japanese
Tan, Dun	b. 1957	Simao, China	USA
Ye, Xiaogang	b. 1955	Shanghai, China	China
Yu, Julian	b. 1957	Beijing, China	Australia
Wen Deqing	b. 1958	China	Switzerland
Xian Xinghai	1905-1945	Macao, China	China
Yun, Isang	1917-1995	Tongyeong, South Korea	Germany
Zhou, Long	b. 1953	Beijing, China	USA

## **APPENDIX B**

### **Complete work edition of *I Ching* violin concerto**

by Larry Stitsky edited by Ka Wong  
Movements 1-8

This score has been removed for  
copyright or proprietary reasons.

## APPENDIX C

### **Complete work edition of *Out of Peking Opera* violin concerto**

Out of Peking Opera for Solo Violin and Orchestra by Tan  
Dan edited by Ka Wong p1-11

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